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ECTION
SALVADOR

Hart and other new ideas, by Robert M. Kaus

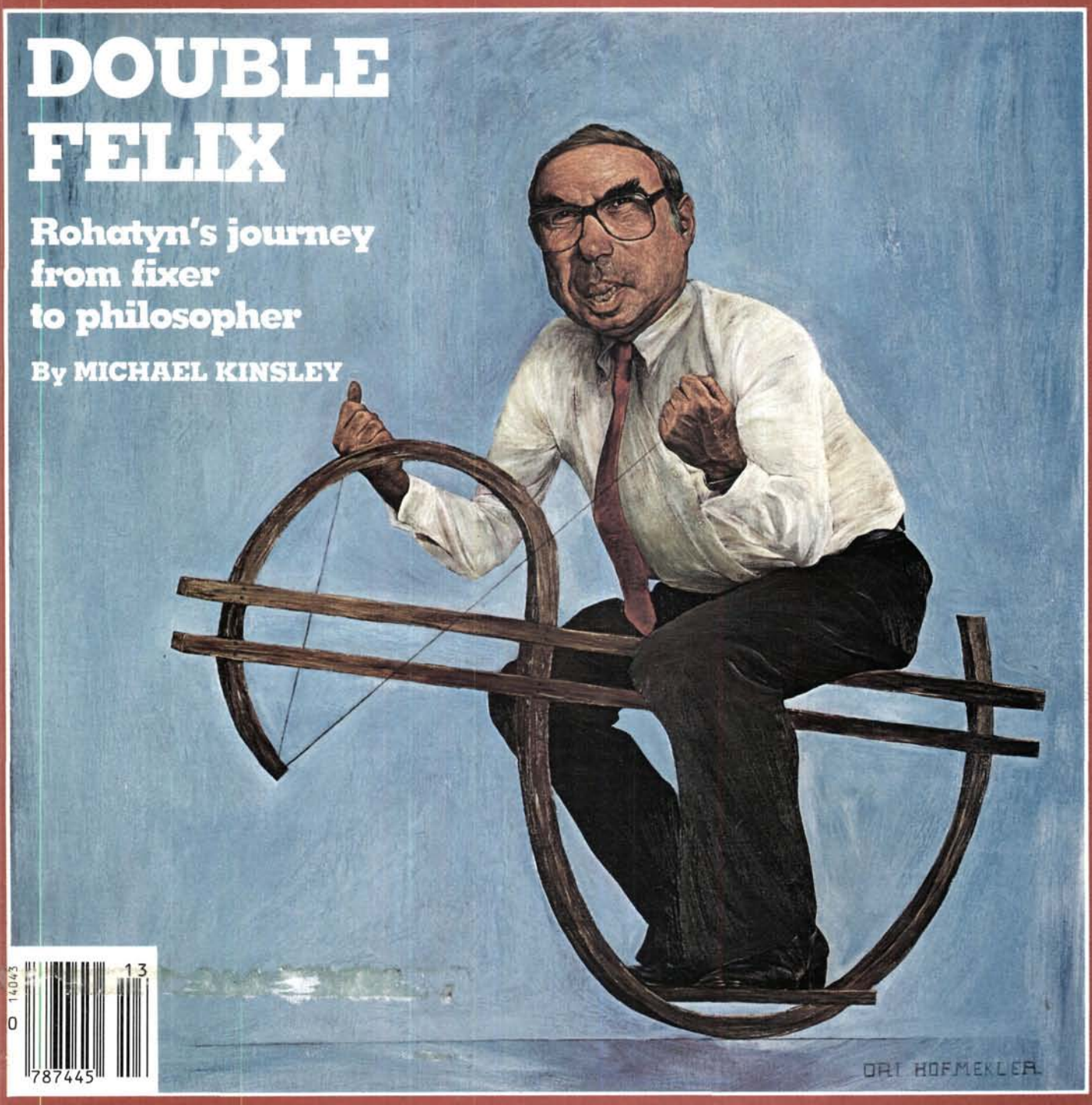
'He-e-ere's Ronnie!' • Theodore Draper On Barbara Tuchman • Marie Syrkin

THE NEW REPUBLIC

DOUBLE FELIX

Rohatyn's journey from fixer to philosopher

By MICHAEL KINSLEY



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CORRESPONDENCE

BIALER RESPONDS

To the editors:

Concerning your criticism in "The Upside Abroad" (TNR, February 20) of my recent article in the *New York Review of Books*, "Danger in Moscow," I would like to inform you that: I am a convinced proponent of strong American and NATO defenses and welcome very much the change in the overall balance of forces in the 1979-84 period in favor of the West. I do not believe at all in "appeasing" the Soviet Union, if this term refers to the lack of opposition to Soviet expansionism by any means necessary, to the recognition as irreversible of any of Soviet conquests, or to one-sided concessions from the United States that are not reciprocated by similar Soviet concessions. At the same time, I believe that United States' Soviet policy should pursue two tracks simultaneously: competition with and containment of the Soviet imperial drive; and cooperation in such areas as arms control and reduction, banning nuclear weapons in space, and agreements on nuclear non-proliferation. I believe that I do know what my views on the Soviet-American conflict are better than the editors who wrote the article.

SEWERYN BIALER
New York, New York

YOUNGER VS. KINOY

To the editors:

Irving Younger's review, "A Cause Above The Law" (TNR, December 26, 1983), accused Arthur Kinoy of professional unethical conduct. That is a serious charge because of Mr. Younger's well-deserved stature in the legal community. Mr. Younger, however, is wrong—not in the sense of taking one side of a disputable issue of lawyer's ethics, but in the sense of the applicable rules of ethics and relevant Supreme Court decisions. Mr. Kinoy did not, as Mr. Younger contends, engage in "professional misconduct" deserving of "censure or worse."

It is true that Mr. Kinoy saw his union client's strategic purpose, in litigating before the N.L.R.B., to be, as he writes on page 56 of *Rights On Trial*, "to gain time and to retake the initiative" in negotiations. At the same time, Mr. Kinoy reports, the union's charge that the company had refused to bargain in good faith had a reasonable basis in "stories, episodes, material of all sorts."

Under the *Canons of Professional Ethics*, in force at the time, Mr. Kinoy's client was entitled to have him assert "any and every remedy . . . authorized by the law of the land." Mr. Kinoy could not conduct a case "merely" to harass or injure the company; his professional duty was "to insist upon the judgment of the Court as to the legal merits of his client's claim."

The rules are the same today. Nor is the client's desire for more time an inappropriate consideration. In a recent case, for example, the Supreme Court unanimously held that an employer had a constitutional right to his day in court on nonfrivolous claims, despite the fact that the employer's true purpose was to harass the union organizers who were the defendants. The Court has also held that a corporation can file a complaint regardless of intent to violate antitrust, as long as the suit is not a "mere sham" on the merits.

Contrary to Mr. Younger's assertion, therefore, the client's "ulterior" purpose does not render the lawyer's conduct improper, and corporate lawyers, acting as Mr. Kinoy did, have not been and would not be subjected to "censure or worse."

MONROE FREEMAN
Hempstead, New York

Mr. Younger replies:

As Mr. Kinoy tells the story, on the day before the N.L.R.B. hearing was to take place the union leadership informed him "that they were really not interested at all in whether they ultimately won an order from the N.L.R.B. that the company had been guilty of unfair practices." They merely wanted "some leverage" in the pending contract negotiations. If that isn't an improper reason to litigate, then nothing is, a conclusion which even Mr. Freeman should find hard to defend.

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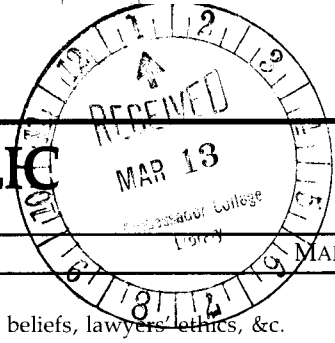

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FROM WASHINGTON

Rx From Dr. Seuss

Others may disagree, but in my opinion a crucial turning point in the development of Dr. Seuss's thought came with the publication of *Horton Hears a Who* (1954). You will recall the plot. Horton, an elephant, discovers a tiny civilization on a dust spot and protects it from other animals smaller than he but larger than it. Clearly this is an allegory for great-power responsibility in the world. But Dr. Seuss's current interpreters, including his own publisher, prefer to see it as a story that "lampoons social snobbery," because of its emphasis on the rights of little people. With this book, then, the author makes his transition from the old issues of the older generation to the new ideas of the 1950s.

Consider. *The King's Stilts* (1939) is unabashedly Reaganite. It celebrates a folksy national leader who quits work at 5 o'clock in order to relax. The enemy is government bureaucracy, represented by old Droon, who grinds out burdensome regulations for the King's signature. ("Sign here . . . sign there . . . Sire, hurry. There are hundreds more to come.") Droon ends badly.

In *Horton Hatches the Egg* (1940, and Seuss's masterwork, in my judgment), the theme is welfare dependency, symbolized by "Mayzie, a lazy bird" who abandons her child and moves to Palm Beach when offered free day care. Horton (the very same) is the spirit of Republican private-sector initiative, with his stalwart cry, "*I meant what I said and I said what I meant./An elephant's faithful one hundred percent!*" In his book, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, libertarian philosopher Robert Nozick has ably analyzed *Thidwick, The Big-Hearted Moose* (1948) as a defense of individual liberty against the claims of collectivism. (One wonders, though, whether Thidwick, *qua* moose, isn't also a symbol of big government.)

By the late 1950s, Dr. Seuss's new drift is clear. *Yertle the Turtle* (1958), about the rise and fall of a dictator, complacently assumes that tyranny can be vanquished by a small burp. (Had he learned nothing from Hungary, two years before?) *The Lorax* (1971) pits an Ansel Adams-like environmental prophet against a callous industrialist, who growls "business is business!/And business must grow" shortly before chopping down the last Trufella Tree.

Perhaps this history will add a little perspective to the public discussion of Dr. Seuss's latest treatise, *The Butter Battle Book* (Random House, $6.95 in washable hardcover), in which the good doctor turns to the issue of war and peace. Art Buchwald has called it "must reading." Coretta Scott King says, "May the wisdom of this book help parents double their efforts for world peace." And Joan Ganz Cooney of the Children's Television Workshop says the book "has brilliantly dramatized for children the number one issue of our age."

The number one issue of our age is not cholesterol. *The Butter Battle Book* concerns two nations, the Zooks and the Yooks (no Gooks need apply), separated by a wall and a minor cultural difference: Zooks prefer their bread butter-side-down, whereas Yooks prefer it butter-side-up. Because of this difference, the narrator's grandfather tells him, "you can't trust a Zook . . ./Every Zook must be watched!/He has kinks in his soul!" Patrolling the wall with a Snick-Berry Switch, a Yook is disarmed by a Zook with a slingshot. He responds with a Triple-Sling Jigger, which is met by a Jigger-Rock Snatchem, and so on, until each side stands ready to drop a Bitsy Big-Boy Bomberoo on the other.

The story is told in flashback from the moment of crisis. The drawings are uncharacteristically gloomy and autumnal. Also uncharacteristic is the existential, cliff-hanger ending. "Dr. Seuss's Bleak Polemic," *The New York Times* calls it. "[C]aricatures too close to contemporary international reality for com-

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MARCH 26, 1984

PRIMARY LUNACY

Washington this week, more than usual, is a city of empty heads. The twenty or thirty thousand lawyers, lobbyists, public and party officials and ex-officials, Capitol Hill staffers, "policy analysts," consultants, journalists, and hangers-on who collectively make up what has come to be called the "political community" are in a state of glassy-eyed shock. They wander the streets and corridors of the city, plucking at each others' sleeves and asking, "What happened? What is happening? What *will* happen?" Normally, one of the pleasures of life in Washington is that when a big political story breaks, there is a cozy, pleasurable sensation of being in on it. This week the feeling, overwhelmingly, is of being out of it.

Nothing that gives this big a jolt to the capital's habitual smug assumption of omniscient superiority can be all bad. And no doubt the desire of New England's cantankerous voters to administer just such a jolt helped bring about the dizzyingly rapid rise of Gary Hart and the sickeningly sudden fall of Walter Mondale. Yet the whirlwind that struck in New Hampshire, Maine, and Vermont was disturbing all the same, even a bit frightening. We do not say this because we find the prospect of Mr. Hart's nomination and election especially alarming. On the contrary, in our judgment he would make a reasonably good President—possibly a bit better than Mr. Mondale, possibly a bit worse, but in substance not dramatically different; and either of them, we expect, would probably prove superior to both the incumbent and his predecessor. No, we're worried for reasons that are independent of the personalities and policies of this year's particular set of candidates. There is something ominous about the volatility of the voting public, and something amiss in an electoral system that gives that volatility such free rein.

In the parliamentary democracies of Europe, potential leaders work their way up through a system that guarantees that they are experienced and tested national figures, well known to the voters, by the time they are considered for the highest office in the land. What can the West Europeans be thinking about the stability of their transatlantic protector as they contemplate the news from New Hampshire? In the space of a single week, the Democrats of that state went from a 37-13 preference for Mr. Mondale over Mr. Hart (as measured in *The Washington Post*-ABC poll) to a 40-29 preference for Mr. Hart over Mr. Mondale (as measured in the actual results). New Hampshire has produced surprises before, but they were generally rooted in real events. Vietnam gave us Eugene McCarthy and George McGovern. Watergate gave us Jimmy Carter. What gave us Gary Hart? In the absence of a compelling issue, such an extreme swing in so short a time smacks of capriciousness, which is only natural when everything the voters know about a candidate is derived from a few months of imageering. Luckily, Mr. Hart is a pretty good man. But many, perhaps most, of those who voted for him had no way of knowing that. The bizarre system by which we choose our Presidents, a system that makes it possible for a near unknown to get a grip on a major-party nomination in the course of three or four weeks of frenzied excitement, could someday produce a genuine monster.

The press, as usual, has come under heavy attack for its role in all this. It is accused of making too much of Mr. Mondale before Iowa, and too much of Mr. Hart after Iowa. Above all, the press, and especially television, is faulted for overemphasizing the early caucuses and primaries at the expense of later contests in larger, more representative states. It's true that the press does this, and it's true we would all be better off if it didn't. But to make this complaint is to quarrel with human nature. The press likes New Hampshire for the same reason Roger Bannister is more famous than Sebastian Coe: firsts are more interesting. In any event, the press has never found a way to report these early campaign events to anybody's satisfaction, including its own. In 1972 Edmund Muskie won the New Hampshire primary by a large majority, but the press declared Mr. McGovern the winner because he did better than expected. This was true, but "expected" wasn't a candidate and Mr. Muskie was. By 1976 the press had learned to stick to the actual numbers, and Mr. Carter became the beneficiary of a relatively even split among his opponents. (Mr. Carter's total in the '76 New Hampshire

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primary was 28 percent—one point *lower*, interestingly enough, than Mr. Mondale's disastrous score this year.) This year the press was so shaken by its failure to see the Hart phenomenon coming that it has tended to lose perspective. The early Hart victories were genuine and deserved lavish coverage, to be sure. But the day after the Maine caucus, when reporters were rushing to pronounce Mr. Mondale politically dead, the aggregate totals of the popular vote in Iowa, New Hampshire, and Maine stood as follows: Mr. Mondale, 77,102 votes; Mr. Hart, 60,267; all others, 65,611. It wasn't until Mr. Hart's lopsided victory in the March 6 nonbinding Vermont primary that he went ahead of Mondale in actual votes cast.

When a story is this hard to cover, sometimes there's something wrong with the story. The real trouble here is not with the press, or with the candidates. It is with the manner in which the two parties designate their nominees. This system is a central part of our basic political process. Though the nominating systems are not even mentioned in the Constitution, they are plainly constitutional arrangements in the broad sense of the term. Indeed, they are far more important than most of the arrangements that *are* outlined in those sections of the written Constitution dealing with the election of the President. The Constitution is meticulous in admonishing the electoral college to be sure to "sign and certify" its ballots, and in specifying that once signed and certified the ballots must be "sealed." But who cares how carefully the electors sign, certify, and seal their ballots if the candidates named in those ballots have been nominated by a process that is perfectly crazy?

The Founders regarded the mechanics of choosing a President as a matter of the utmost gravity, to be changed only by amending the Constitution. But in practice the formal Constitution comes into play only after the choice for President has been narrowed down to two persons. The design of a rather more important process—the one by which the field is reduced from 90 million (the approximate number of citizens eligible to be President by virtue of being native-born and over 35 years of age) to two—is left to a grab bag of self-serving politicians, temporary party commissions, and boosterish state legislators. Why is the New Hampshire primary the first in the nation? Is it because the American people, after due deliberation, have determined that the cause of representative democracy is best served by vesting enormous influence in a state that has one quarter of one percent of the national electorate, the looniest daily paper in the country, and no ethnic groups to speak of apart from French Canadians? Of course not. New Hampshire is first today because it was first back when primaries were a minor sideshow in the nominating process, and because the state legislature has since passed a state law decreeing that New Hampshire's primary must be at least a week before anybody else's. (It would be interesting if some other state were to pass a law placing the identical requirement on its own primary.) And why does "Super Tuesday," with its dozen primaries and caucuses, come so hard on the heels of Iowa, New Hampshire, and Maine? Because the Founders believed in "front-loading?" No, it's because the Hunt Commission, the Democratic Party subgroup that drew up the rules for 1984, brokered a deal between Edward M. Kennedy and Mr. Mondale. The schedule they came up with was designed to let the two of them fight it out to a quick conclusion, while denying the likes of Mr. Hart the kind of leisurely campaign calendar that had proved helpful to such dark horses of previous races as George McGovern and Jimmy Carter. Mr. Kennedy dropped out, and Mr. Mondale, staggering under the hail of onrushing primaries and caucuses, is now in the process of being destroyed by his own invention, a turn of events which must seem as nightmarish and unfair to him as it no doubt seems sublimely just and beautiful to Mr. Hart. The point, however, is not whether this or that candidate benefits. The point is that it makes no sense for an important part of our political system to be designed simply to benefit a particular politician or set of politicians, or to increase the hotel and restaurant receipts of a particular state. The mechanics of the American political system should be designed for one purpose: to maximize the American public's ability to make a wise and considered choice.

THE RUBE GOLDBERG quality of the nominating process goes back long before 1984. That process has always been the orphan of American constitutionalism; there's no use waxing nostalgic about the good old days. The smoke-filled room, in its various incarnations, produced two Roosevelts, but it also gave us (on the 103rd ballot at the 1924 Democratic convention) John W. Davis. And even in the days before primaries and anchormen, it was not entirely unheard of for a youngish, vaguely forward-looking, comparatively little-known candidate to ride to a nomination on a wave of media-fired enthusiasm. In 1940 Wendell Willkie came out of nowhere to snatch the Republican nomination from the party establishment. Mr. Willkie was not even a declared candidate until February of the election year, much less a household name. His boom was orchestrated by the most powerful media organization of the day, Time Incorporated, which was entranced by the unorthodoxy of his break with isolationism and by his more amorphous qualities of leadership and eloquence. Mr. Willkie ignored the then-powerful party machinery, which was allied with various of his opponents, relying instead on youthful members of "Willkie Clubs." A Gallup poll of Republicans taken two months before the convention showed Mr. Willkie at 3 percent, Thomas E. Dewey at 67. At the convention it was Willkie 44, Dewey 29. Mr. Willkie's main backer, Russell Davenport of *Fortune*, thought of the candidate as a real-life version of the hero of the Frank Capra film *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. That ought to ring a bell for NEW REPUBLIC readers. (See "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," by Sidney Blumenthal, TNR, January 30.)

Again, our complaint is not with Gary Hart or his success. It's entirely possible that a more rational, more representative, more coherent system would have produced the same result in the end. Nor is our complaint with the

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idea of popular primaries, which represent an enormous advance for democratic participation. But it is past time to rethink and reform the nominating process, and to smooth out its anomalies, especially of scheduling, which so distort the process now. The framers of the Constitution sought to construct a method of choosing Presidents that would be insulated from the passions of the moment. What has evolved, as we have seen in these last two frenzied weeks, is a system that exaggerates and magnifies those passions. We have this system by accident rather than by design; but the task it is assigned to perform is too important to be left to chance. It should not be beyond the capacity of American ingenuity to design a system that allows dark horses a chance to earn a place in contention without automatically chewing up front-runners, that permits calm deliberation without snuffing out excitement, and that refrains from conferring absurdly disproportionate influence on unrepresentative, arbitrarily self-designated electorates. The present *ad hoc* system is not only an offense to reason but also a potential threat to legitimacy. Reforming that system, come to think of it, is just the sort of project that might appeal to a new President open to new ideas.

NOTEBOOK

□ WE'RE GRATEFUL for the massive reader response to our Jesse Jackson Soundalike Contest, announced in the October 17, 1983, issue. Hundreds of entries were received, mostly in the classic "from-to" form, and the judges had great difficulty choosing among them. Honorable mention goes to Ira A. Schochet, of Brooklyn, N.Y., for "We don't want to live on the dole, we want to confer with Helmut Kohl," and to the following from-to's: "from press conference gaffes to street smart staffs" (Burling Lowrey, Washington, D.C.); and "from jellybean mentality and massive domestic cuts / to true race equality and kickin' corporate butts" (Eric R. Stewart, Fairfax, Va.), to which last sentiment we say, "Amen." The grand prize winner of a free one-year subscription to THE NEW REPUBLIC is James M. Cornelius, of New York, N.Y., for the following couplet: "I don't want no once-liberal progressive weekly journal to poke fun at the leading black / I just want my subscription check back."

□ THREE YEARS AGO, when Israel destroyed Iraq's nuclear reactor, it was unanimously condemned at the U.N. and elsewhere for excessive preemption. Some called Israel's move paranoia. There is now strong evidence that Iraq has been using chemical weapons, namely mustard gas, in its war against Iran. Mustard gas caused thousands of casualties in World War I. In 1925 it was banned in a treaty whose signatories include Iraq and Iran. Mustard gas (which burns all tissue on contact, including skin, lungs, and eyes) has since then been considered too awful a weapon to be used. Iraq, principally because of its incurable feud with "radical" Syria, has recently been accorded entry into the community of "moderate" Arab states. If this is what Arab moderates do to their Islamic brethren . . .

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "Why do we lose between six and seven mothers for every thousand live babies that are born? In the past, many theories have been offered; lately there have been a few facts. In a Children's Bureau case-by-case survey of 7,500 maternal deaths, investigators checked up on every death of this type occurring over a two-year period in fifteen states. The doctors who did the work found that almost exactly a fourth of the women had died after some form of abortion. Everyone knows—though no one ever, ever mentions—that women will sometimes resort to dangerous tactics to rid themselves of an unwanted addition to the family. But now this most hushed-up of awkward subjects can no longer be ignored. The abortion problem is no longer restricted to that Victorian myth, the wayward girl, nor does it go hand in hand with illegitimacy. The current studies have shown that most of the women who died from abortions were already burdened with responsibility, and left orphaned families behind them. In the Children's Bureau series, 90 percent were married. In New York the greatest number of abortion deaths occurred in the age group of 35 to 39, and in the sixth, seventh, and eighth pregnancies." ("Wasting Women's Lives," The Editors, March 28, 1934.)

Is the real effect paradoxical?

EARLY RETURNS

TOPPING THEIR PERFORMANCE on election day 1980, when the television networks declared Ronald Reagan the winner before the polls had closed in some parts of the country, NBC and CBS projected the results of the February 20 Iowa caucuses fifteen minutes before they started. The Iowa Democratic Party complained that the networks' actions demoralized caucus participants, and in Washington, Representative Timothy Wirth held hearings to investigate. Do the early projections deter people from going to the polls? Common sense suggests they do. Network executives, fearing legislative action to regulate election coverage, claim there is no evidence that they do. Now there is evidence from 1980 showing that common sense was right—but also suggesting the early projections did not influence the 1980 results in the way most people imagine.

John E. Jackson, a political scientist at the University of Michigan, has published a careful and sophisticated analysis called "Election Night Reporting and Voter Turnout"

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in the November 1983 issue of *American Journal of Political Science*. His research is based on a nationwide survey of 1,814 people interviewed both before and after the 1980 election. His finding: "Many people heard projections of the Presidential election outcome before the local polls closed," and, if they had not already voted, they were "less likely to vote than people who did not hear the news."

Jackson estimates that among people who were registered and had not voted by 6 P.M. Eastern time, hearing the news that Reagan had won lowered their probability of voting by 6 percentage points in the East, 9 points in the South, and 12 points in the Midwest and West. Democrats believe this dropoff cost them a number of close races on the West Coast—notably Al Ullman's House seat in Oregon, which he lost by fewer than 4,000 votes, and James Corman's district in California, which went to Republican Bobbi Fiedler by 752 votes. But it turns out not to be so simple. Jackson finds that the election night news had more of an impact on Republicans than on Democrats. According to his figures, Republican turnout on the West Coast dropped by 17 points among those who heard the news; Democratic turnout dropped by 13 points.

JACKSON'S STUDY is convincing for several reasons. It is based on individual interviews rather than on aggregate election results. But, you may ask, don't people lie in surveys? Yes, they do, but the diligent researchers went to the trouble of looking up every respondent's voting record in the local election files to see if he or she had really voted. Seventy-four percent told the interviewers they had; 58 percent actually did. Jackson compared actual turnout with each person's expected likelihood of voting, based on the person's age, region of residence, partisanship, sense of civic duty, and expressed intention to vote. Turnout was consistently lower than expected among those who heard Reagan had won.

Why was the effect greater for Republicans than for Democrats? Professor Jackson believes that "knowledge of the outcome deters supporters of winners more than supporters of losers." There are reasons for this phenomenon. Voter turnout usually rises about 17 percentage points in a Presidential election. A lot of "casual voters" come to the polls once every four years. They tend to be less partisan, less ideological, and more strongly influenced by the immediate mood of the country. As a result, they usually give greater than average support to the winner. The news that it's all over makes the most difference to these kinds of people, most of whom would have voted Republican in 1980. For instance, Jackson shows that the effect of hearing the outcome was greatest among those "marginally inclined" to vote. The news had little effect on people who were either very likely or very unlikely to vote. It is the marginal voters who tend to go with the winner and who are most likely to say "Why bother?" if they hear somebody has already won.

The 1980 race was one in which the results were expected to be close, but early projections indicated just the opposite. What happens when an election is supposed to be a landslide and the early projections show it is too close to call? Jackson thinks the news may stimulate more people to turn out. He suggests that the voters may be getting news-savvy: "Given the publicity on the topic, people may have learned to wait until late on election day to vote knowing they can find out before the polls close if the election is unexpectedly close."

They may also act impulsively. Alaska and Hawaii are five time zones removed from the East Coast. In both states, third-party candidates did unusually well in 1980. John Anderson got 10.6 percent of the vote in Hawaii, presumably from liberal Democrats who said, "Why not vote for the candidate we really like, now that Carter has already conceded?" In Alaska, Ed Clark, the Libertarian candidate, came in third with a phenomenal 11.7 percent of the vote—ten times better than his national performance and four times better than his next best state. If people are convinced that what they do doesn't matter, their inclination is to say, "What the hell." And to vote accordingly.

WILLIAM SCHNEIDER

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The Democrats vs. Marcos.

PHILIPPINES FUTURES

Manila

IN THE LAST six months, the Philippines has experienced more political turmoil than at any time since World War II. Late last summer it appeared that President Ferdinand E. Marcos was gravely ill, and there was widespread speculation about who would be his successor. Benigno Aquino, Marcos's rival prior to the imposition of martial law in 1972 and the principal threat to the continued power of the Marcos family, felt compelled to return from three years in exile in Boston. Aquino was gunned down as he stepped off the plane. Despite repeated denials by Marcos, evidence continues to mount which implicates units of the military and even senior members of the government. Aquino became at once a martyr equal in status to José Rizal, the great patriot executed in 1896 by the Spanish, with an enraged citizenry expressing itself through massive and ongoing protests. Whatever the state of Marcos's health and the sordid truth about Aquino's death, the inertia that prevailed for much of the preceding decade has been shattered. The transfer of power has suddenly become an overriding issue.

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The technocrats, the middle class, and the urban intelligentsia have openly withdrawn support from Marcos, taking to the streets for the first time. This may be one of the first revolutions in the Third World led by the privileged and sophisticated. (So far the peasants in the provinces have been relatively passive.) One of the most immediate results of the political unrest has been a severe economic crisis. Capital flight has increased since the Aquino assassination and left the peso, already a fragile currency, without any hard support. The $25 billion international debt cannot be serviced, but the risk to the international banking community is so great, and the problem is so clearly political, that banks are not willing to foreclose.

The 1984 U.S. Presidential election is being watched closely because Filipinos of all political persuasions believe that the United States will play an important role in determining who will succeed Marcos. This belief is based both on the historical legacy of the Philippines' colonial dependency on the United States and on the subsequent economic, military, and political realities which now make the U.S. Embassy a key center of power in the archipelago. The possibility of a Democrat winning the White House worries officers in the Philippine military, who fear a coup; it also encourages the vast majority of Filipinos hoping to regain freedoms lost under Marcos.

HISTORICALLY, the Democratic and Republican parties have viewed the Philippines in distinctly different ways. At the beginning of this century the Republican Party, then led *seriatim* by William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and William Howard Taft, saw the Philippines as an important symbol for emerging American power, as a base from which to enter the China market, and as an imperial obligation. Rudyard Kipling urged a divided American polity to "Take up the White Man's burden," warning the United States that it would be judged by the way it assumed the obligation to "Fill full the mouth of Famine and bid the sickness cease." McKinley, riding a crest of imperial fervor and national pride, "put the Philippines," in his own words, "on the map of the United States. . . ."

The Democratic Party always placed far more emphasis on self-government and on the development of democracy for the Filipinos. The 1900 Democratic platform specifically stated: "We condemn and denounce the Philippine policy of the present Administration . . . we favor an immediate declaration of the nation's purpose to give the Filipinos, first, a stable form of government; second, independence; and third, protection from outside interference. . . ." Most of nominee William Jennings Bryan's acceptance speech that year dealt with the evils of imperialism in the Philippine context, and Bryan made it the central issue of his campaign. The Democratic platform of 1912, in sharp contrast to the Republican, pledged early independence, and in 1920 the gap between the Republicans and the Democrats on the timing of independence was again clear. It was under Franklin Roosevelt that the Philippine Commonwealth was created, and under Harry Truman that independence was granted.

Today Filipinos think they understand the Republicans' current and future Philippine policy. In a visit in 1981 Vice President Bush toasted Marcos, saying, "We love your adherence to democratic principle—and to the democratic processes." In the fall of 1982 President Reagan staged an extravagant state visit in Washington for Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos. Marcos had the event massively covered by Filipino TV in an attempt to bolster his domestic standing. All of this is in marked contrast to the Democrats' efforts to push Marcos toward democracy. Filipinos recall that President Carter refused to welcome Marcos to the United States for a state visit. Carter also successfully renegotiated a military bases agreement, substantially reducing the aid (which is, in effect, rent for the military bases) that Carter's Republican predecessor Gerald Ford and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had been prepared to send.

IT IS important to remember that America's stake in the Philippines, the world's seventeenth most populous nation, is enormous. The United States is the second largest employer in the archipelago after the Philippine government itself. Clark Air Field and the Subic Naval Base are among the most important military installations maintained by the United States anywhere in the world. The bases pump more than $200 million into the local economy annually. From 1946 to 1982, economic and military assistance plus government grants and loans totaled $4.75 billion. Billions of dollars have been invested here by U.S. firms.

Filipinos speak English, believe in private enterprise, and function socially, culturally, and economically—and, before Marcos, politically—through institutions that are analogous to those in the United States. (Before 1972 Filipinos had a Supreme Court, a House of Representatives, a Senate, and a two-party system.) Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos have been educated in the United States or have fought for it. For every American who died in the Bataan Death March, nine Filipinos perished. There is a Filipino community in the United States of about one million people, mostly on the West Coast. Carlos P. Romulo, the recently retired Foreign Minister, once wrote a book entitled *Mother America*. Perhaps most significantly, Benigno Aquino looked to the United States as the last best hope of the Philippines.

Aquino's martyrdom on the airstrip in Manila challenges the United States, and the Democrats in particular, to refocus their attention on the Philippines. Filipinos look to the Democrats to reassert the verity that has been proclaimed from Bryan to Carter: that it is possible to link national interest and ideological goals in the Philippines. The platform adopted by the Democratic Party this July should have a Philippine plank once again, calling for a return to democracy, free speech, a free press, an open franchise, an honest independent judiciary, the right of habeas corpus, and the subordination of the armed forces to the civil authority of the legitimate government. These

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are values deeply felt by Americans and Filipinos. They are the values that led Aquino back to Manila. They were the cherished legacy of the free Philippines prior to martial law.

The Democratic platform should state clearly that American aid to the Philippines is linked directly to the degree to which Marcos and his successors return to the political, civil, and judicial freedoms that existed before the imposition of martial law. Why not link the $900 million in aid already negotiated for the next five years to the return of political democracy and civil liberty? The aid specified for economic assistance could be guaranteed now, and the military aid subjected to annual review. Increased economic aid could be made contingent upon the real dismantling of dictatorial rule. Filipinos have never understood how the United States could have given such vast foreign aid support to Germany and Japan, its former enemies, while being niggardly with rehabilitation funds for the Philippines, the country that suffered so terribly for the United States.

The Democrats should also make it clear that the United States will not prescribe any specific model of government that the Filipinos must follow. Rather than accepting authoritarianism, the Democrats need to say to Filipinos and to the world that the United States is willing to invest its money not only to maintain its bases and preserve governmental stability but also to defend democracy and to see its values restored to people who crave them. Benigno Aquino said shortly after he was exiled in 1980, "The foundation of democracy is the sense of spiritual independence which nerves the individual to stand against the powers of the world." The Democratic Party platform can help renew that spiritual independence and restore democracy in the Philippines.

DAVID JOEL STEINBERG

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Fundamentalism meets Club Med.

TURMOIL IN TUNISIA

Tunis

BARELY thirty-five miles inland from the sea, in the most European of all North African countries, is a city more like Mecca or Medina than anyplace else in the Mediterranean. Kairouan, founded in 670 A.D. as the first Islamic outpost in Northwest Africa, lies in the very heart of Tunisia, the least Islamic of any polity in Arab North Africa. It has none of the Latin flavor marking such Tunisian coastal cities as Tunis, Sousse, and Sfax, whose histories are steeped in Roman and Punic as well as Arab traditions. Kairouan is a city of eighty-nine mosques, women veiled in white sefsaris, and prayer calls which trill like a harsh desert wind. Seven pilgrimages to Kairouan exempt the faithful from a pilgrimage to Mecca. It takes barely an hour to drive from the coast near Monastir to Kairouan. But in that short span, one journeys from a hedonistic Mediterranean environment of designer fashions, Club Med resorts, and jet-age film studios to the heart of Sunni Islam. The difference is great—perhaps irreconcilable—and a stunning symbol of the deep divisions bedeviling this country of six and a half million people, to which the recent riots over government increases in food prices gave such violent expression.

The riots did not originate in Kairouan, but farther south and west, in the towns of Kasserine, Gafsa, and Kebilli. These are places even more removed—in terms of culture and living standards—from the "Tunisian Riviera," as the government tourist brochures dub one section of the Mediterranean coast. Kairouan, at least, is relatively prosperous by the standards of the Tunisian interior. But for twenty-eight years, since Tunisia gained its independence from France, Kairouan has been a visible counterpoint to the policies of President-for-life Habib Bourguiba, a man who has infused his people with Western cultural values more thoroughly than any other Arab leader in the twentieth century.

In the formative years of statehood, when Bourguiba gave voting rights to women, railed against the use of the veil, and sought to convert the month-long Ramadan fast into a period of mobilization for national works projects, it was the faithful of Kairouan who objected. They had to be silenced by the gunfire of the gendarmerie. Since then, the holy city of the Maghreb has been quiescent. But the battle between Sunni orthodoxy and the West has simmered on other fronts.

AS EARLY as 1967, hostility against the West was boiling over on the campuses of Tunisia's universities. The issue at hand was Western support for Israel in the Six Day War. But it started a continuing struggle between Bourguiba and the campus radicals. Many of the young men who roamed menacingly through the streets of Tunis in early January, demanding the resignation of Bourguiba's Prime Minister, Mohammed Mzali, were students who had come to the capital on scholarships from places like Kairouan and other conservative cities of the interior. These have often been the ones who become involved in radical campus politics. On the right there is the Islamic *Khwanjia* ("Tendency") organization. On the left are groups oriented toward the Albanian Communists and the Iraqi Baathists. Battles on campus between right- and left-wing students have included the use of tire chains and acid bottles. Off campus, however, their aims have sometimes dovetailed: both the extreme right and extreme left were active in the bread riots.

Upon completing their studies, many go back to the

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interior, where jobs are scarce, and development lags behind the coastal areas. Though Tunisia's gross national product is relatively high for a Third World country, it is very unevenly distributed. Unemployment is over 20 percent, and many of the jobless are young, well educated, and politically active. And the farther south and west one goes, the worse it gets. The European tourists, who provide so much of Tunisia's foreign exchange (and who are responsible for so many of the West's misconceptions about the country) rarely penetrate beyond the coastal resorts. For a long time, northern Europeans have seen Tunisia much as Americans, until recently, saw the Caribbean: a nearby, problem-free paradise in the sun where winter is always a long way away. But in Tunisia, winter is never a long way away. It's only a short drive from the coast to the bleak, inland plateaus, where snow covers the Roman ruins and shepherds shiver in their robes at dawn. Even a tourist, seeing the throngs of Arab men gathering to stare at the Scandinavian women on the beaches at Sousse, can get an inkling of the tensions here.

The economic picture is gloomy. Aid from the United States and the World Bank is decreasing, and it is getting harder for Tunisians to crack the protectionist wall of the European economic community. But the country will receive approximately $67 million in American military assistance this year, partly because of the specific threat of Libyan aggression and partly because of Tunisia's worldwide strategic importance—lying midway along the Mediterranean littoral, opposite Italy and between the two Soviet-supplied leviathans of North Africa, Libya, and Algeria.

GUARDING THIS precious bit of real estate against aggression from without, and turmoil from within, is Bourguiba—and the system he has built. Bourguiba, a rect octogenarian, is the last surviving giant of the Arab world's struggle against the political and economic domination of the West (the others having been Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Mohammed V of Morocco, and Abdul Aziz Ibn Sa'ud of Saudi Arabia). He is the quintessential father figure of a nation: dominating the liberation struggle against France since the 1930s, and ruling absolutely since independence in 1956. Like the late Charles de Gaulle, he is given to talking about himself in the third person: "Abilities as great as Bourguiba's are not found round every corner."

There is really no reason for Bourguiba to be modest. By Third World standards, his has been as socially advanced and benign a dictatorship as his Western patrons could realistically have hoped for. Tunisia may not be as far along as Egypt in terms of a multiparty system. Nor does it have a feisty press like Lebanon's. But real political power under Bourguiba, perforce, has been shared—and not with the military, as in other Arab countries, but with the labor unions. Tunisia has been unique among Arab states for devoting a large share of its annual budget over the years to the social services instead of to the military, which has begun to expand only in this decade. "Bourguiba's rule has not emphasized power as in Libya, but the well-being of average men and women. He is in the line of this country's nineteenth-century reformers," explained Fatma Haddad, a philosophy professor at Tunis University, and herself an example of the significant role played by women here.

In village cafés in Tunisia, posters advertise the benefits of family planning. Birth control pills are easy to obtain and distributed free of charge. Abortions also are free and legal. Divorce laws are progressive. The literacy rate is high for the Third World, and the percentage of girls in primary schools is only slightly lower than it is for boys. Still, despite the decades of effort, the birth rate, at 2.3 percent (down from 3.5 percent), is still too high given the country's meager resources. And despite the impressive development, structural imbalances grate at the recession-ridden economy: 20 percent of the poor have 5 percent of the wealth; 20 percent of the rich have 50 percent of the wealth. No wonder there was so much ado about the doubling of the price of bread. The government was trying to save money by paring down an inefficient subsidy program. But as one Egyptian cabinet minister told me recently in Cairo—another North African city where bread is heavily subsidized—food subsidies are as politically vital to North African governments as national health insurance is for North European ones.

In recent years, under the shadow of rising fundamentalism, Bourguiba has beaten a partial retreat. The Ramadan fast is more strictly enforced than it used to be. And it is conceivable that more concessions will be made to religious elements. It is important to note that both the government and the opposition (including the National Labor Union) have always been strongly opposed to the brand of radicalism preached by the students. And so has the overwhelming majority of the population, a population which, unlike those in other Arab countries, is ethnically homogeneous and thus inherently stable. After Bourguiba, Tunisia could very well move to the left or to the religious right. But it would likely be a shift of only a few degrees.

Tunisia's first three decades as a modern state have been so tranquil that its stability and pro-Western orientation have largely been taken for granted. But in this country of fragrant jasmines and pomegranates and austere plateaus—home of both André Gide and Ibn Khaldun—there is more at stake than most realize. The U.S. Sixth Fleet has been calling at the Port of Tunis for years with fanfare. In addition, the country has provided crucial air and electronic facilities for the West. Tunisia may not be to America what it once was to Rome. But then again, unlike Carthage, it hasn't been as troublesome either.

ROBERT D. KAPLAN

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They're new and improved, but is that enough?

GARY HART'S IDEA COLLECTION

BY ROBERT M. KAUS

Barbara Walters: Mr. Hart. You have campaigned as the candidate of new ideas. Your opponent Mr. Hollings is quoted as having said that all of your new ideas are Mr. Mondale's old ideas. So would you give us two brand-new ideas different from any of the other candidates' proposals?

IT WAS ON February 23, at the League of Women Voters' debate in Manchester, New Hampshire, that Barbara Walters finally asked Gary Hart the question. It was the question that all the other campaigns were itching to have someone ask. I was working for the Hollings campaign, and we were frustrated by what we peevishly saw as the way Hart had presented himself as the candidate of fresh thinking without burdening the voters with any actual ideas. We resented Hart's imitation-J.F.K. posturing. We resented Pat Caddell's imageering. We were jealous of the way the press was playing along. The impulse was strong to call Hart's bluff: O.K., Mr. Smartypants. You've got so many new ideas. Name two. Go ahead. Make my day.

It didn't work, of course. Gary Hart is not some Joe McCarthy figure, claiming to have a list of ideas but really bluffing with a blank piece of paper. He has a list, all right—lists of lists. To placate Walters, Hart easily rattled off a couple of fresh-sounding proposals. Idea No. 1: a "freeze" on plutonium production as a means of halting the arms race. Idea No. 2: "Individual Training Accounts," where workers could sock away money, tax exempt, to be spent later learning new skills. Both are ideas. Both are new. Walters moved on to crucify Jesse Jackson.

Hart has more where those ideas came from. He has not spent the last seven years harvesting the fields of policy for nothing. But a gunnysack full of five-point plans does not a great leader make—otherwise the Brookings Institution would be the mother of Presidents. The interesting question to ask about Hart's idea collection is not whether it exists, or even whether any particular idea will work, but what it tells us about the man's habits of thought, his philosophy of governing, and his vision, if any, of what American society should look like.

Hart's best and best-known ideas—his "military reform" proposals for defense—are only a little help when trying to answer these questions. True, any number of larger themes are embedded in the military reformers' emphasis on small, cheap, reliable weapons over complex, expensive weapons, on a "maneuver" strategy of surprise and deception over a ponderous "attrition" strategy. The obvious theme is a distrust of the usual assumptions of left ("spend less on defense") and right ("spend more"). Other themes might be an awareness of the ways bureaucratic lobbying (in this case, among the various branches of the armed forces) perverts the government; a refusal to judge programs by the amount of money they throw at a problem; and an appreciation of the ways in which the spontaneous complexities of life (e.g., on a battlefield) can baffle even the most intelligent planners.

But when Hart has attempted to repeat his feat of ideological jujitsu ("turning the issue on its side," as he calls it) in areas outside of defense, the main lesson he seems to have carried with him is the slightly arrogant confidence that he can do better than the traditional left or right. Not even this much comes through in the foreign policy area. For better or worse, when Hart tries to explain how he would actually use the military—reformed or not—his ideas are either traditional Democratic positions (get out of Nicaragua, get out of Lebanon, support SALT II) or discrete gimmicks like the plutonium freeze or his proposal for a "crisis center" to avoid accidental nuclear war.

To spot some common features among the marbles in Hart's sack, you have to look at his domestic suggestions. In reviewing Hart's book, *A New Democracy*, for this magazine (see "Requiem for Neoliberalism," TNR, June 6, 1983), Arthur Schlesinger Jr. saw little that departed from the liberal mainstream, noting that Hart worked "within the framework of activist government." But Schlesinger's benediction misses some important distinctions between Hart's version of government activism and the older New Deal tradition. (Whether or not these differences amount to something called "neoliberalism" is a secondary, semantic issue, although something of a sore point both for Schlesinger and for Hart himself, who claims to despise the label.)

First, and most important, where the New Dealers sought direct government intervention through government agencies, staffed by government bureaucrats, Hart's most important ideas seek to *avoid* government, or at least

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to avoid both bureaucracy and direct government expenditure. Instead, we get government by tax incentive. Hart proposes tax incentives to encourage research and development, and tax incentives to encourage worker ownership. Employees would get tax breaks for paying into their "individual training accounts." Investors would get tax breaks if they bought stock earmarked for the creation of new industrial capacity; businesses would lose tax breaks for loans used for corporate mergers. Hart would fight pollution with pollution taxes and inflation with inflation taxes—he endorses a Tax-Based Incomes Policy (TIP) which raises taxes on workers and companies that violate wage-price guidelines. Hart's version of "industrial policy," as far as I can make out, would use tax incentives (and possibly trade protection) to lure business and labor into "modernization and growth agreements."

HART'S frequent resort to the tax system may be a form of government activism, in the sense that the I.R.S. is part of the government, but it also reflects an instinctive distrust of the government, in the sense that GS-11s and the Department of Housing and Urban Development are part of government. Hart seems to regard the federal bureaucracy as inherently inefficient, to be circumvented if at all possible. Time and again, he emphasizes that his proposals would "not require direct government subsidies or high administrative costs." His phobia about administrative inefficiency may be amply justified, but it is surely an important break with the tradition of F.D.R. and L.B.J. It is neo-*something*.

It is also a bit deceptive. First, tax incentives may be simpler than direct government regulations, but somebody must set the tax rates and enforce them. It is not all that clear that it requires fewer bureaucrats to police pollution taxes than to police direct regulations. Often bureaucrats are inevitable, and there is something reassuring about older-style liberals who want to galvanize the bureaucracy into action instead of sweeping it under the rug.

Second, tax incentives may not be "direct expenditures," but they cost the government money and add to the deficit just the same. That is why they are called "tax expenditures" by many Democratic reformers, including Hart, who rails on page 34 of *A New Democracy* that such tax expenditures are never "systematically" examined. Hart would surely not deny that his various tax breaks would cost money, although he never adds them up "systematically." But he does use the indirect nature of tax incentives, as politicians have for decades, to make his programs appear painless.

Which is why so much of Hart's innovating seems like a game of hide-the-subsidy. By running his industrial policy on tariffs and tax breaks, for example, Hart can assert (as he did in the Iowa debate) that he would not be committing government *capital*, à la Felix Rohatyn's proposed Reconstruction Finance Corporation. In describing his plan for "lifeline" utility rates, Hart can say it involves no direct government expenditure and no government bureaucracy—because it would shift the cost of subsidies for the poor and elderly to utility consumers and a private bureaucracy. Hart lists his Individual Training Accounts as a $500 million item in his budget—but that is only because the scheme would be mostly financed by a separate, multibillion-dollar off-budget tax of $200 a year on both employers and their employees (modeled after the Social Security tax).

Individual training accounts and lifeline utility rates may be perfectly good proposals, just as "Hart" is a perfectly good name, but the element of evasion and gimmickry is still troubling. It is also at odds with another consistent theme of Hart's domestic proposals, a strain of good-government rationality. Hart initially supported the indexing of tax brackets, because he felt taxes should be raised openly and honestly, not through "bracket creep." (He would now defer indexing to cut the deficits.) He proposes a federal capital budget, because the failure to spread expenditures for roads, bridges, and education over several years prejudices federal spending against these needed items and prevents rational planning. He defends his vote against the Chrysler bailout as a vote against *ad hoc* industrial policy, as opposed to the "long range" and "systematic" industrial policy he prefers. With Hart everything is "long range," and "systematic," accomplished effortlessly and rationally by jiggling the tax rates. Automation will replace the labor of civil servants. It's as if the economy were a big computer and Hart a master programmer instead of a leader of men. Give him the right spreadsheet and he will interface us with the future.

WHAT ABOUT vision? Political writers are always calling on politicians to have vision, but it's not an easy commodity to come by, or to advertise. (I remember my candidate, Hollings, striding into the office one day and demanding, half-jokingly, "Goddamn! Get me some vision.") Certainly a list of a hundred "new ideas" is not necessarily a vision, as Hart himself seems at times to recognize. In his now-famous February 7 "Caution or Courage" speech in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Hart reiterated his standard stump assertion that his "generation of leadership will care more about solving problems than debating ideology." But five pages later, Hart attacked Mondale for "establishment politics" that "raises pragmatism to an ideology." What is pragmatism if not solving problems? And what does Hart offer besides pragmatism?

Certainly Hart has no "vision," no new ideology, if by that we mean a clear idea of what a just and ideal America should look like, who should be rewarded with wealth, and what should be dignified with civic respect. What are we living for? Hart's idol, Robert Kennedy, thought in those terms, but Hart doesn't. True, there are weak speechwriters' mumblings in *A New Democracy* about seeking "growth and a better standard of living for all Americans not because prosperity is an end in itself, but because it furthers humane values—quality and equality." But Hart gives little indication that he has thought clearly

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about where he would let the marketplace govern the distribution of wealth, and where and why he would intervene in the name of either equality or community.

For example, Hart has leaped to endorse the idea of "comparable pay for comparable worth," which seeks to equalize the pay of men and women in different occupations through "job evaluations" that measure "skill, knowledge, education, experience, and responsibility." Hart sees this as "economic equality." But "comparable worth" begs the question of worth; it would probably foster a brand of inequality based on titles, credentials, and social prestige, favoring those with clean white-collar jobs over more proletarian types. Is it really a self-evident outrage, as Hart implies, when the market dictates that "the monthly salary of a beginning librarian was $750 a month while a street-sweeper operator earned $758"? The point isn't that the answer is obvious. The point is precisely that the answer *isn't* obvious, and Hart obviously hasn't thought about it.

IF HART lacks a lofty vision of the just society, I do think he has the makings of a less lofty, but appealing, vision of what his candidacy stands for. I'm not talking about the Move-Over-It's-My-Turn generational obsession, but a more substantive vision that grows out of the generational theme: the idea that Hart is the candidate who will sweep away the "old arrangements" and the old interest groups that are blocking social progress. If, as the economist Mancur Olson claims, industrial societies grow stagnant as their economies are clotted by the accretion of special favors to powerful interest groups, then Hart seems to offer himself as the candidate to dissolve the blockages, clean out society's arteries, and get the economy pumping again.

Hart's emphasis on new industries, on research and development, on encouraging retraining and relocation—in short, the part of his agenda borrowed from Lester Thurow and Robert B. Reich—make up the positive side of this theme. In each case, Hart is offering Americans an incentive to adapt, move, change jobs, change industries, to generally get out of their rut. Hart also came close to articulating the negative side of the theme in his Council Bluffs speech. He denounced the "establishment" that was clinging to its "declining power," arguing that the Democratic Party was "in danger of becoming the party of the teachers' unions" instead of the party of education, of becoming "the party of organized labor leaders in Washington" instead of "the party of workers on the assembly line."

Missing from the Iowa speech, or Hart's book, is any indication of just what it is these tired old interest groups are clinging to that Hart would take away. Thus Hart says he would "restructure entitlements" like Social Security, but he has been careful not to say how, and to make the changes sound like painless "reforms." Hart criticizes the teachers' unions, but his education proposals have carefully skirted any new ideas that would trouble the National Education Association, particularly ideas that involve the firing of incompetent teachers.

Indeed, Hart's new ideas rarely feature significant concessions from the entrenched interest groups he attacks. While Hart now talks in Kennedyesque terms about calling for "shared sacrifice," he has not called for that sacrifice himself. He criticizes his elders for their "lost faith" in America's "strength of character," but he has yet to show us the strength of his own character. Just as he would prefer to hide the costs of his programs, so Hart still seems to prefer tax incentives and relocation allowances to sacrifices.

Since Hart spent most of the first year of his campaign cultivating his own set of interest groups—students, women, and the teachers' unions he now reviles—there is reason to be skeptical about his newly unveiled ask-what-you-can-do rhetoric. To his credit, Hart acknowledged, under pressure from George Will on ABC's "This Week With David Brinkley," that his "'industrial modernization and growth agreements" might require workers to "defer wage increases." (In contrast, Mondale, asked what sacrifices he would ask of the middle class, said "I would like to lighten the burden on them a little bit.") But unless he makes a clear, honest appeal for sacrifice the basis of his campaign, will President Hart, when the time comes, have the courage to oppose union demands for immediate wage hikes, and management demands for immediate profits? Or will he settle for a nice, systematic, cooperative long-range plan that involves lots of retraining and robots but leaves the industry's basic competitive problem unaddressed? In short, will Hart be any more willing to take something away from somebody than Mondale is?

MONDALE, for his part, seems intent on repeating Barbara Walters's performance. According to recent newspaper reports, the Mondale campaign strategy is to challenge the new front-runner to come forward with his "new ideas," and then pick them apart. This is a tactic designed to land Mondale in the presidency of a prestigious university by August. Insiders may resent Hart's self-anointment as the "new ideas" candidate, and they may see all sorts of problems with each specific policy Hart ticks off. But the public, bless it, seems to like the idea of a politician who is at least trying to break the mold. A campaign featuring a Democrat who defends the pre-Reagan status quo and a Democrat who promises to launch an F.D.R.-like period of experimentation will be no contest.

Unfortunately, it isn't enough to "open up the corridors of power" to the "most creative and talented and imaginative and innovative people in America," as Hart, hand in pocket and finger jabbing, promises to do. J.F.K. did that. His new generation of thinkers brought a new energy to Washington, but they also brought a war that discredited them all. Gary Hart has ideas, all right. He has harvested a bumper crop. But a President also needs judgment and spine. For Hart in the coming weeks, the issue is not issues, but character.

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From G.E. Theater to the desk in the Oval Office.

YOUR HOST, RONALD REAGAN

BY CHRISTOPHER J. MATTHEWS

THERE IS something amiss when journalists openly cross-examine a President of the United States about his attendance record and work habits. Normally such topics are rightly regarded as trivial, the kind of personality-profile fluff that would earn a serious political reporter the scorn of his peers. Yet at his most recent news conference Ronald Reagan was not only asked such questions but forced to answer them. Is he "running things"? Is he "a full-time President"? That such questions are being asked suggests there are some big pieces still missing in the Reagan puzzle. By the fourth year of a Presidency we are supposed to be examining the quality of an incumbent's performance, not whether he shows up for work.

Yet the reporters are on to something. In circling around what is beginning to be called the "leadership issue," they are closing in on what in fact has been one of Reagan's greatest political strengths: his well-practiced detachment from anything unpleasant—including government itself. He is an incumbent President who refuses to act incumbent. He plays chief of state grandly but often abdicates his coincidental role as head of government. Faced with complexity, he refers the matter to "experts" or commissions. Faced with failure, he dissociates himself. Lebanon is only the most recent example.

Reagan's uncanny ability to step away from the responsibility for the conduct of "the office I now hold," as he called it in his reelection announcement speech, has often been attributed to the fact that he is an actor. Of course he can escape accountability—didn't he spend years slipping from one costume into another? Isn't he trained to move from one scene to another, from one role to another? No wonder he speaks so convincingly, even when the lines have been hastily rewritten—isn't that what an actor is paid to do? If times are tough, he can be cheerful. If critics are mean, he can be amiable. If his programs cannot sell themselves, he can apply the magic of the storyteller, the spell of the fantasist.

Yet the actor explanation does not quite satisfy. Reagan, after all, is always Reagan. Unlike other actors, he is a man not of a thousand faces but only of one (or at most two). There have been other actors-turned-politician, but none who pulled off such a dazzling entrance into politics and such shining durability. What tends to be forgotten—what has never been fully recognized—is that Ronald Reagan earned his greatest fame not on the movie screen but on the television tube. People got to know Ronald Reagan, the man, not at their neighborhood theaters but in their own living rooms. By the millions they met him not as an actor but as something subtly but profoundly different—as a television personality. Rather than see him playing someone else, they grew used to him in a far more intimate role, that of himself: your host, Ronald Reagan.

During his eight years on the old General Electric Theater, Reagan enjoyed certain distinct professional advantages. While the program's other performers were at the mercy of the weekly dramatic material—it was an anthology series—the star was not. He was no more responsible for the quality of the shows than for the quality of G.E.'s products. As the "host," he occupied a more defensible position. It was Reagan who ended each show with the famous slogan, "Here at General Electric, progress is our most important product." That "here" was located at some imaginary point between General Electric itself and your living room. But unlike more recent TV pitchmen, such as Lee Iacocca and Frank Perdue, Reagan was never burdened with the pretense that he was himself part of the actual production. He never purported to know anything about building cars, plucking chickens, or designing light bulbs. On the contrary, our host was someone like us—a typical consumer of the sponsor's products. My strongest memory of G.E. Theater—twenty-five years later—is the image of the host and his wife, Nancy, sitting side by side in the spacious living room of their "totally electric home." They looked a bit better off, perhaps, than most of their audience—and they were not embarrassed by the luxury—but they did not seem in any important way different from us. In fact, they personified what we wanted to be, or, to put it a bit more commercially, what we wanted to have.

The persona of host was crucial for Reagan in the transition from actor to politician, and as President he has worked hard to perfect that persona, which did so much for him in the golden 1950s. Consider, for example, how he works his Presidential press conferences. For Reagan, the reporters seated before him row on row in the East Room serve an important function. They are the means by which he shows the audience at home what a regular guy

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he is. No President has ever worked harder to demonstrate this quality. Did you ever wonder how it is that this President is so good at names in his press conferences? No matter who the reporter, no matter how obscure the news organization, the President always seems to know the particular "Joe" or "Bob" or "Ann" on a cozy, chummy, faintly paternalistic first-name basis. And if Reagan appears in full control—not of his material but of the White House press corps itself—it is no accident. He has done his homework. First, he uses a seating chart. Second, before coming on camera himself he checks a closed-circuit television monitor of the press room, and he scans the various Joes, Bobs, and Anns. With the aid of this hidden monitor, he is able to get a fix on the location of those reporters with whom he intends to be intimate that evening. Having matched nicknames with faces, and faces with seats, Reagan is ready to go on the air. He is the host of the show, the reporters are his guests—and he is ready to impress the public with his kindly geniality (and ready, in the process, to provoke war whoops in newsrooms across the land as each publisher or editor in turn hears the President of the United States call on his correspondent in Washington by his first name.)

ALL OF THIS is about as spontaneous as the decision to air these broadcasts in prime time. When we see the President in one of these debonair performances, we see not a head of government confronting a potentially hostile press but a quizmaster on familiar terms with his contestants. Sometimes the show does not run as smoothly as it should. In Reagan's last outing there was a bit of confusion when he called the name "Pat." The target, Patrick McGrath of Metromedia, told me later that at first he couldn't believe this friendly diminutive was addressed to him. He had no reason to assume the President knew his name, especially since he was quite clearly looking past him to the row behind. Still, after a beat he stood and asked his question. What else was he supposed to do, live on all three networks?

During one of these evening programs, on July 26, 1983, the President carried his role as host to its logical conclusion. Before taking questions, he announced that he was going to introduce "three new members of the White House press corps"—welcoming them, as it were, to the White House press conference family. As the smiling President called the names of these members of the Washington press establishment, it was difficult not to think of Johnny Carson introducing Ed, or of Richard Dawson introducing a set of new contestants on "Family Feud," or even Jimmy Dodd introducing a brand-new Mouseketeer.

Reagan does his best work as national host on his Saturday radio addresses. The content of these broadcasts recalls one of his memorable one-liners from the 1980 campaign. "I'll admit I'm irresponsible," he would say, challenging the holders of official power, "when they admit they're responsible." Each week, as he schmoozes with us over the airwaves, he purrs the same message: *they* are the ones responsible. No matter what is ailing the country at the time, those who tune in at 12:05 P.M. Eastern Standard Time hear the same off-stage "they" being called on the carpet. Each Saturday that Iowa-trained radio voice comes to us bristling with complaints about government—that dread purveyor of deficits, crime, irreligion in schools, and other evils. Listening to him, it is easy to forget that this Paul Harvey-on-the-Potomac is in real life the head of the federal Administration.

THE SUBTEXT of every radio speech, its hidden message, is the same: Reagan is not in government, he exists at some unique point—previously uncharted—*between* us and government. As a disembodied voice on the radio—the White House refuses to allow the broadcast sessions to be televised—he becomes a kind of national neighbor, concerned, just as we all are, about the way things are going. The timing of the broadcasts reinforces the subtext: it's not a regular work day, so even more than usual the President is off duty, removed like us from the Washington power structure. It was from this ambiguous position that he described the shabby treatment given his good friend Jim Watt. Free to ignore the immediate cause of Watt's departure, the famous reference to "a black, a woman, two Jews, and a cripple," our host rounded up the usual suspects—the media, the far-out environmentalists—and bemoaned the injustice done his friend. Tuning in, one would never have guessed that this indignant but apparently uninvolved commentator was actually the same man who had quite briskly accepted Watt's resignation.

Reagan has proved equally adept at hosting the State of the Union. In these annual addresses he has polished the role of host to a high sheen. Let the Bill Moyers types extol the President's role as national educator; Reagan is not about to play schoolmarm on the intricacies of world events and fiscal policy. If, as in 1982, there was fear of unemployment, Reagan would talk soothingly of some quickly forgotten bauble, such as the New Federalism. If, as in 1984, there was anxiety about Lebanon, he would kiss it off in a single paragraph on the eighth page of a ten-page speech. The mass audience, he knew, would not study the transcript. But they would remember the mood.

To create the mood he seeks in his State of the Union addresses, Reagan has played the role of host not in some metaphorical sense, but literally and explicitly. Like Ed Sullivan on the old "Toast of the Town," he livens up the proceedings by introducing celebrity guests seated in the studio audience. Last year it was Lenny Skutnik, the courageous Congressional employee who some weeks before had jumped into the icy Potomac to save a victim of the Air Florida crash. By introducing a real-life hero, and one whom the assembled members of Congress, Supreme Court Justices, and ambassadors could hardly decline to join him in applauding, the nation's

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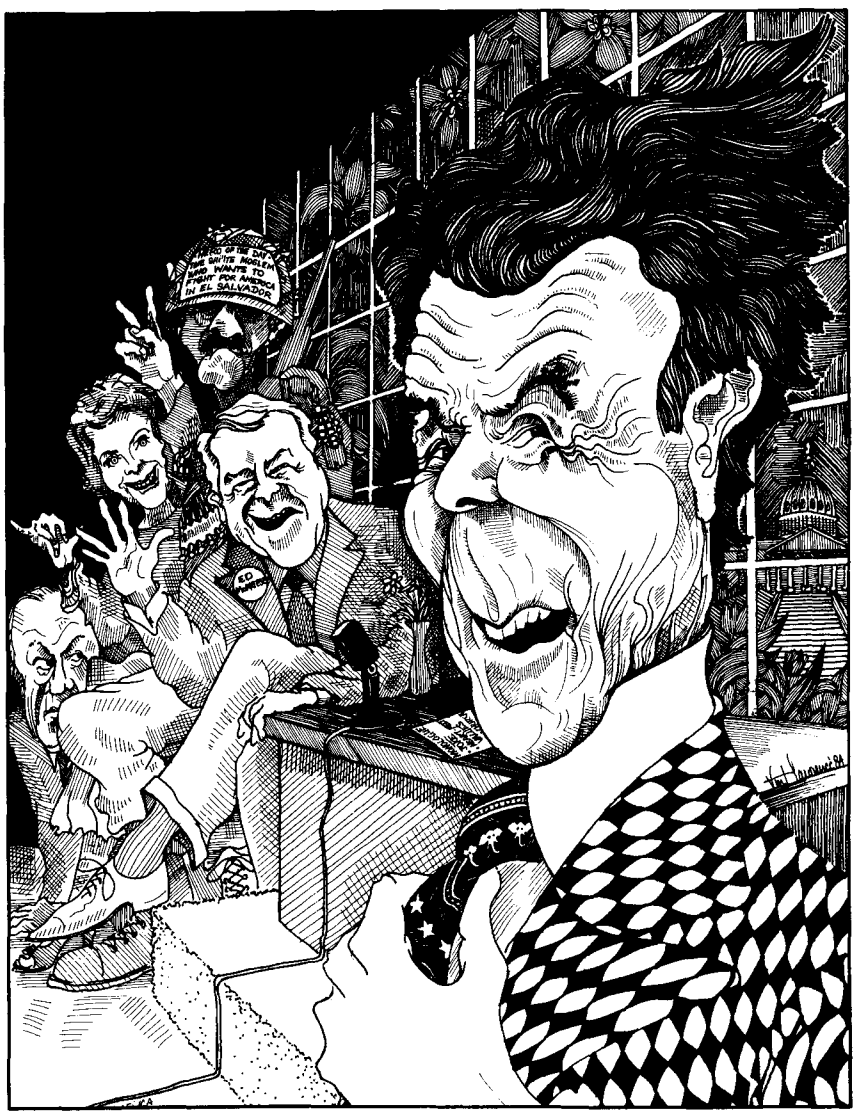
host basked in the reflected glory of genuine personal courage. Reagan relished the moment enough to repeat it in this year's address. This time the spotlight fell on Sergeant Stephen Trujillo, a hero of the Grenada operation. "Sergeant Trujillo," the President said dramatically, "you and your fellow servicemen and women not only saved lives, you set a nation free. You inspire us as a force for freedom, not tyranny; for democracy, not despotism; and, yes, for peace, not conquest." And then the kicker: "God bless you." If you weren't on your feet by then, you weren't just unpatriotic, you were some kind of atheist besides.

As national host, Reagan has enviable political insulation. On the same evening that he focused the limelight on Sergeant Trujillo, he began shifting the responsibility for the coming debacle in Lebanon. Those who listened could hear the first unmistakable sign that the President was preparing to do exactly what he would savage others for suggesting: get the Marines out of Lebanon. That lone paragraph on page eight began with these words: "Your joint resolution on the multinational peacekeeping force. . . ." *Your*—that wonderful second-person plural possessive—laid the blame right where Reagan wanted it, on the men and women sitting in the House chamber.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

It was not the last time the President would fade himself out of the picture when the word "Lebanon" was mentioned. After withdrawing the Marines from their airport bunkers, where they had become as anachronistic as marooned Japanese soldiers still at their island posts, he again stood back. "Lebanon's troubles," he instructed a group of Republican women, "are just part of an overall problem in the Middle East." REAGAN DENIES U.S. FAILED IN LEBANON, proclaimed the headline the next day. Asked at his last press conference a direct question—had the United States lost credibility in Lebanon, and had Syria won?—Reagan treated the audience at home to one of his patented narrations. Talking for eight full minutes, he produced an imaginative re-creation of events which had taken place at a distance. It was highly reminiscent of the Chicago baseball games he used to broadcast from a studio in Des Moines, thumping his hand on the table to simulate the crack of ball on bat. And if the home team is getting shellacked, why be the pitcher when you have the option of sitting on the sidelines and doing the play-by-play?

If Lebanon remains first on the Reagan Administration's 1984 worry list, deficits are a close second. The man who promised to balance the budget "possibly by 1982" finds himself proposing a $180 billion deficit for fiscal year 1985. Here again, Reagan disclaims responsibility. Employing what Francis X. Clines of *The New York Times* describes as his "third-person-impersonal mood of politicking," the President warns (he is addressing Republican activists at Eureka College in Illinois that "politicians at the national level must no longer be permitted to mortgage our future." Let members of Congress sit down, if they wish, with some of his staff people and see if they can come up with a "down payment" on the deficit. Would another President have felt obliged to propose a lower deficit in the first place? Never mind. It was a comfortable, and familiar, posture for Reagan to assume. Twice on the eve of the 1982 elections, Reagan had journeyed to Capitol Hill *not* to offer proposals for ending the deficits but to play guest host at rallies denouncing them; arriving at the Capitol steps, he presented himself not as the author of the federal

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budget or even as a participant in the budget process, but simply as an average citizen, concerned, just like everybody else, about the rising tide of government red ink.

Every President, by virtue of his experience, brings with him a different notion of the office. Reagan, the Great Communicator, is no exception. As the host of a TV anthology series, Ronald Reagan learned that it was better for an actor not to *be* an actor and thus depend each week on the quality of the material. He learned that it was better for an actor to play himself-as-host, hovering gently *over* the material but never quite responsible for it. The key is detachment. (Four years ago Ronald Reagan beat Jimmy Carter in the debate not by outscoring him but by brilliantly interposing himself between the audience and the event itself, by becoming not a contestant but a commentator. "There you go again," he narrated—which was to say, "There you go again, you poor, desperate, grubby politician.") Reagan, in his pre-political incarnation, played a particular role in a large corporate structure. He was the spokesman for General Electric, not the C.E.O. Through all those seasons of pitching G.E. products and being charming, the audience at home never seriously held him accountable for the value or quality of those products. The public seems to view his role as spokesman for the products of the national government in a similar light. So far, no one has pried the lid off Reagan's TV-age persona. If in fact he "does not apply himself," as Walter Mondale charged recently, there is not yet any clear sign the public wants him to. It may be that the public is content with a President who skates easily on the surface of things. Still, I tune into each press conference waiting for that one courageous, self-effacing "Joe" or "Bob" or "Ann" to stand when called upon, look our national host in the eye, and ask the following question: "Mr. President, what is my last name?"

The elections promise further carnage, not democracy.

EL SALVADOR'S LOST HOPE

BY CHRISTOPHER DICKEY

San Salvador

THE OLD MAN crouched in the stairwell as guerrilla snipers fired at the polling station and black-helmeted Salvadoran National Guardsmen answered with grenade launchers, rifles, and machine guns. Asked why he had come to vote, he smiled, cringing slightly at the thunder of the gunfire. "Because we hope to end all this," he said and hugged the cinder-block wall a little closer. That was in March 1982, and his was the dream of the day. But the dream did not come true, and although Salvadorans once more plan to go to the polls on March 25, many of the hopes of two years ago have been replaced by fears. The electoral process once billed as "the solution" to the nation's strife has become yet another pretext for coups, counter-coups, and deeper, bloodier divisions. The elections are a contest for power that will do little or nothing to help the Salvadoran people.

The three leading candidates are all promising peace. One is Roberto d'Aubuisson, whose connection with the country's death squads brings him opprobrium in Washington but a certain glamour in the hate-filled environment of Salvadoran politics. "Tremble, tremble Communists, because the people have awakened," warns one verse of his campaign song. "El Salvador will be the tomb where Communists meet their end." At his campaign rallies d'Aubuisson uses the same theatrics he employed in the 1982 assembly elections. He sometimes holds up a watermelon and hacks it open. Like the Christian Democrats, he says, whose banners are green, this fruit is green on the outside—the knife plunges, the liquid gushes—but they are red on the inside. D'Aubuisson's intensity gives him the charisma of a cobra.

José Napoleón Duarte—the watermelon man whom d'Aubuisson is aiming to defeat—must bear not only the accusation that he was once a friend and ally of men who now fight alongside the Marxist guerrillas, but also the brunt of his more recent record as head of the 1980-82 military-civilian junta. Those were two of the most vicious and catastrophic years in the nation's bitter history. Moreover, the reforms that he helped promote then, and that might have won him many votes in the past, have faltered badly in the last two years. "*Si*," says his campaign rhetoric. "Yes to democracy, yes to the social pact, yes to peace. . . . El Salvador, yes, has a solution. . . . This is the decisive hour!" Indeed. But the Christian Democratic Par-

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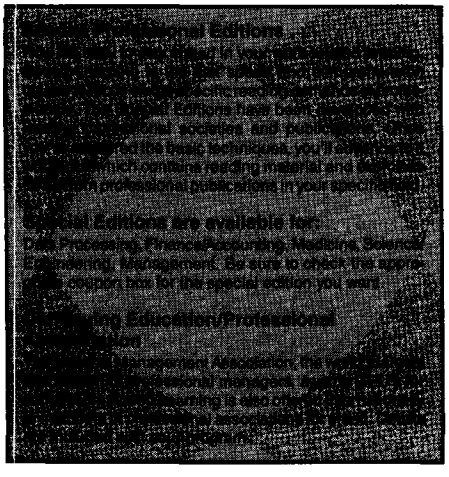

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ty's solutions, like its candidate, have been tried enough in the last few years to look old by now, and badly worn.

In this already unpromising field of contenders, the third major candidate, Francisco José "Chachi" Guerrero, is a breath of stale air. As the candidate of the old National Conciliation Party (P.C.N.), which was the "official" party winning or stealing all elections from 1962 through 1977, the rotund, jovial Guerrero is a symbol of the corruption and the feckless administration that was supposed to have ended with the October 1979 coup by young colonels and majors. "The election of Chachi," said one of the officers who participated in the coup, "would mean complete failure."

But should Duarte or d'Aubuisson be the victor, it would be a step into such uncertain and dangerous terrain that many military men and some U.S. diplomats have wished, not very discreetly, that Guerrero might somehow take the elections. Duarte might portray himself, accurately, as the center between the extremes of left and right in the country. But Guerrero represents the center between the extremes in the army. And that could be much more important. To understand this peculiar dynamic, one must remember that the Salvadoran Army is the final arbiter of political power. Despite the rhetoric of democracy, the elections take place at the army's convenience, and the results are observed only with its tolerance.

STILL, THE army itself is beset by deep schisms. Since the 1979 coup, three fairly distinct and often hostile groupings have been evident: the reformers, who were disposed to compromise and, in some extreme cases, to collaborate with the Salvadoran left; the neofascist right, which sought draconian solutions to the insurgency and is primarily responsible for the military and paramilitary death squads; and a more amorphous group that overlaps somewhat with the other two. It might be called the opportunistic sector. Recognizing their almost total dependence on U.S. assistance, the officers in this group put the maintenance of that aid, the furtherance of their own careers, and the survival of their institution above ideological considerations.

Most of the reformers were forced out of their commands or out of the country in 1980 and 1981. The command of the army is now mainly in the hands of the conservative opportunists who see Duarte as, at best, untrustworthy and unreliable; perhaps even disposed to talk seriously with the left if he could get away with it. Their candidate is Guerrero. Meanwhile, the neofascists increasingly hold influential positions, including the command of the notorious Treasury Police. Their man is d'Aubuisson. (See "The Truth Behind the Death Squads," TNR, December 26, 1983.)

Moreover, a vital role in this power struggle is played by an organization that officially ceased to exist in 1979: the Nationalist Democratic Organization, known as ORDEN. This right-wing network of informers and enforcers was the old P.C.N.'s principal means of guaranteeing its power in the 1960s and 1970s. It was a mechanism for pervasive repression that, ironically, took as its model the totalitarian neighborhood "defense committees" of Marxist dictatorships. Peasants in every village were brought into its ranks and given limited (but in rural El Salvador quite special) privileges, such as the right to carry guns. Long before there were any guerrilla organizations in El Salvador, the men of ORDEN were at work rooting out, and in many cases killing, "Communists." Their overall activities were guided by the presidential secret police, an organization in which d'Aubuisson, as second-in-command, played a very important role.

At its peak in the early 1970s, ORDEN may have counted eighty thousand members or more. The hatred they engendered, the blood feuds they created, did not end, certainly, when the 1979 junta formally abolished the organization. To this day many of the worst massacres in rural El Salvador are carried out by the former card-carrying members of ORDEN, or—if the guerrillas get the upper hand—against them. But there is no doubt its grass-roots influence remains strong. When American reporters write with ill-disguised amazement that "the peasants" are backing the right wing, they are forgetting the activities and still pervasive influence of ORDEN's cadre in many of El Salvador's small villages. A key question that no one can answer with certainty is how cohesive the old organization remains, and to whom its members will give their allegiance. It is believed that in 1982 most of the old ORDEN members backed d'Aubuisson. But the P.C.N., the party that ORDEN was originally created to preserve, has worked hard to rebuild its own patronage network in the last two years. The P.C.N.'s control of the Public Works Ministry helps in this cause. Guerrero now claims to have won back at least the younger members of ORDEN.

NO ONE knows just how this tangled situation will sort itself out on March 25. The elections this time are directly for the president. (In the 1982 elections only members of the Constituent Assembly were chosen.) Once the results are certified there will be little chance for the kind of backroom dickering there was in 1982, when the U.S. Embassy and the army high command blocked d'Aubuisson's bid to be appointed interim president by the new assembly.

It is often assumed that Duarte will win a plurality once again, as his party did two years ago. But a plurality, under the new constitution, does not a president make. There are six parties running candidates, and the three smallest are likely to win enough votes to deny any of the three largest a majority in the first round. The first-place finisher must then run against the second-place finisher thirty days after the certification of the first round results, which means the second round should take place in early May.

In fact, if Duarte does not win a majority in the first round, second place is the place to be. Guerrero and d'Aubuisson are expected to split the large right-wing constituency in March. But one or the other will probably get that

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entire bloc in May, and with it, most likely, the presidency. That is, unless something unexpected happens—and, almost certainly, something will. A potential Duarte victory could easily provoke a coup before or after the fact, although his enemies in the military might be persuaded to forgo an open tanks-around-the-palace affair. Any president's power will be greatly circumscribed by the army's commanders. If Duarte is content to rule mainly as a figurehead for the high command, he might be allowed to stay on. He was willing to take that role in 1980-82 in order to survive. The Reagan Administration, certainly, could live with that again.

However, a d'Aubuisson victory in the first or second round might cause serious stirrings in the ranks of the military's opportunists, particularly among the many officers who are persuaded they cannot survive without Washington's multimillion-dollar safety net. Few doubt that an already unsupportive U.S. Congress will ax all the assistance if d'Aubuisson moves into the presidential palace. Certainly a coup to depose d'Aubuisson would be hard for the Administration to condemn, no matter how much it might muddy the image of Salvadoran "democracy" over the short term. Yet the strong minority of d'Aubuisson backers might resist and thus tear the army apart.

As the election draws closer, hopes that Guerrero might rescue the army and the embassy from such sordid scenarios have mostly faded. But, in a classic bit of Salvadoran irony, the rebels could save the day for the government and the military by providing them with a pretext to void the results without seeming excessively anti-democratic.

IN THE last several weeks, the leaders of the five main guerrilla factions have made it abundantly clear what they do *not* want to do, which is to repeat the propaganda fiasco of 1982. They vowed that year that they would bring the country to a standstill and, in effect, make it impossible to vote. On election day they mounted coordinated attacks across the nation, and, in many cases, fired on voters and polling places. The fact that thousands of people lined up for hours waiting for their chance to vote, despite the very clear danger of rebel assaults, was a convincing repudiation of the rebel tactics, and it was reported around the world.

So the rebel leadership has decided this year that it will not attack the voting as such. It will continue its ongoing offensives, however, and presumably there will be no voting in areas under direct guerrilla control. But what do the guerrillas tell their supporters to do in areas not completely under their control? Any call for a boycott or write-ins or intentional nulling of ballots will be seen as a test of their strength at the polls, and that, for many reasons—both ideological and organizational—is the last thing the rebels want. They have been slow to decide what they *do* want. (Some U.S. officials report that the guerrillas are telling their supporters to vote for d'Aubuisson, on the theory that his victory would ultimately work to their advantage. But one must be suspicious of such stories, not only because the rebels deny them, but because they conveniently lay the foundation for justifying a coup should d'Aubuisson win at the polls.)

And the rebels are beset by more than indecision. They are currently facing one of the most serious internal divisions in their long history of fractious infighting. (See "The Other Side," by Shirley Christian, TNR, October 24, 1983.) Despite their growing strength in the countryside, particularly the third of the nation east of the Lempa River, the guerrillas have had little success in rebuilding the urban organizations destroyed in the massive repression of 1980. The one urban guerrilla unit that was still functioning in 1983 is now known as the "Salvador Cayetano Carpio" Revolutionary Worker Movement (MOR). And this group is fighting against the rebel leadership as much as against the government.

THE MOR is a faction within a faction. Its members formerly belonged to the radical Popular Liberation Forces, one of the five Salvadoran guerrilla groups, and were personally loyal to its dogmatic, ruthless founder, Salvador Cayetano Carpio. Last spring Cayetano Carpio ordered the murder in Managua, Nicaragua, of his second-in-command, a woman who had pushed for greater cooperation and unity with the other four factions in the guerrilla front. Cayetano Carpio was then compelled by the Sandinistas in Nicaragua to commit suicide. But before he did so, according to an official Popular Liberation Forces communiqué, Cayetano Carpio "added to his unalterable political cowardice a new infamy" by writing letters to several of his followers claiming the charges against him were "a conspiracy of false revolutionaries" meant to thwart his true revolutionary direction.

The urban commandos in San Salvador bought that line and began pursuing their own agenda. While the top rebel commanders, including the senior officers in the Popular Liberation Forces, have vowed not to attack the electoral process as such, the splinter group has made no such promises. The MOR may have been involved in the murder of two right-wing assembly members. In effect, the MOR has become a left-wing death squad as dangerous to the interests of the guerrilla leadership as the right-wing death squads are to the stability of the government. When a meeting of labor leaders was raided by the National Police in January and six MOR leaders were imprisoned, there was speculation in leftist ranks that the mainstream guerrilla leadership might have tipped off the government.

As the elections bring all of these bitter contradictions and murderous schisms to the fore, there is little expectation that the act of voting will be a solution. Quite the contrary. But many Salvadorans say they will vote anyway: out of habit, out of duty, because it is against the law not to vote, or simply because the hope that somehow something can be done to bring peace never vanishes completely. In the midst of war, the Salvadoran government is not holding elections to which nobody comes, but rather elections in which nobody wins.

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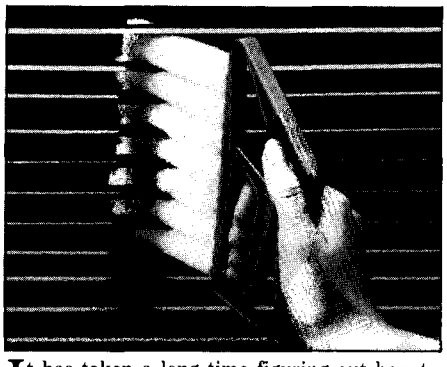
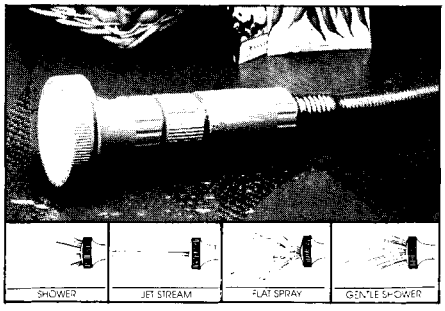
7-FINGERED BLIND CLEANER

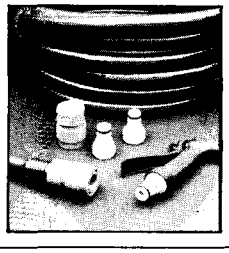


It has taken a long time figuring out how to clean venetian blinds efficiently. Early inventions simply spread the dirt around instead of picking it up. Later ones worked better but mostly cleaned only one slat at a time. Now a California designer has finally solved the problem convincingly. It has 7 roller fingers, 4" long and covered with a synthetic lambswool that picks up and holds dust and dirt. Pull the trigger and the fingers spread enough to slip over the blind slats (6 mini-blind slats or 3 conventional 2" slats). Release the trigger and the slats are held firmly between the cleaning rollers. Then move the cleaner back and forth along the blind, release and grip the next set of slats. When soiled, the cleaning rollers can be removed and washed. These revolutionary blind cleaning tools cost **$9.00** ($1.95) #A787. Two for **$17.00** ($1.95) #A7872.

GARDEN HOSE ACCESSORIES



The biggest problem with most hose nozzles is getting and maintaining the desired water flow. The answer is Nozzle Five. This hose nozzle lets you set water flow to any of five positions. Use the shower setting for heavy watering or car washing, gentle shower for potted plants or window boxes, flat spray for misting foliage and the jet stream for force cleaning patios, decks and gutters. The fifth setting is a convenient stop action. Nozzle Five is made of noncorrosive plastic and costs **$11.00** ($1.95) #A481. Two for **$18.00** ($2.95) #A4812. For fast, dripless connections between hose and accessories we offer Barco quick snap connectors, shown below. They work on the same principle as the snap connectors on pneumatic tools in a garage. They permit you to connect two lengths of hose or add accessories without first turning off the water. No threading required, just snap the male and female connectors together. Waterflow shuts off automatically when disconnected. A set of five snap connector pieces (2 female and 3 male — enough so you can switch accessories at hose end) costs just **$8.00** ($1.95) #A843.



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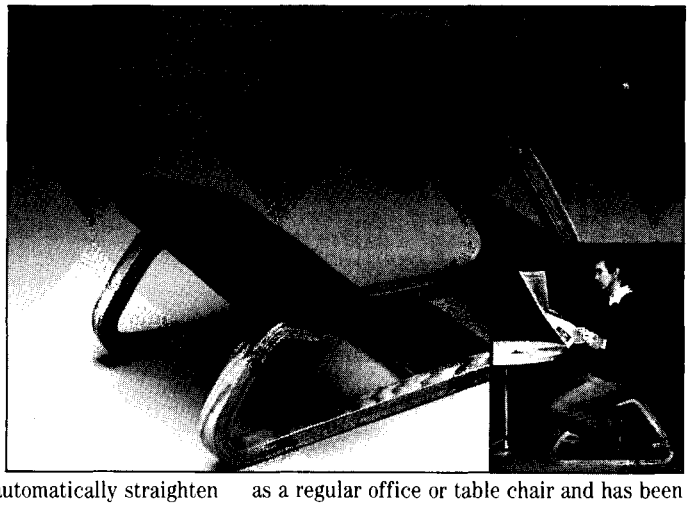
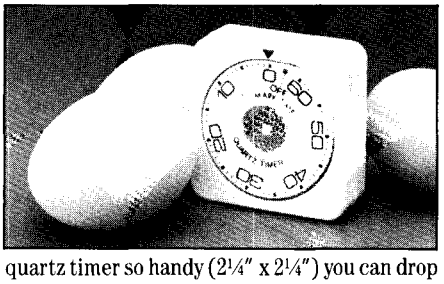


COUNTING BY MINUTES

There are frequent occasions when we need to watch the time without watching the clock — cooking obviously, games sometimes, during exercises and beauty treatments certainly, perhaps most commonly simply as a reminder that there is something we need to do in 5, 15, however many minutes. Our favorite instrument for this purpose is a superaccurate



quartz timer so handy (2¼" x 2¼") you can drop it in your pocket and go work in the garden without forgetting what's on the stove. The dial is graduated in 1-minute intervals, you can count seconds on the advancing ticks, and the eventual conclusion is a pleasantly insistent electronic beeper alarm. The timer operates on a single AA battery (not included), which provides power for 1½-2 yrs normal use. 1-yr warranty. **$16.00** ($2.95) #A1000.

UL LIGHT BUTTON

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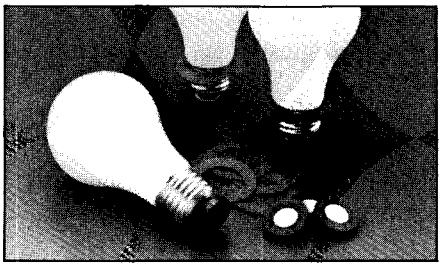

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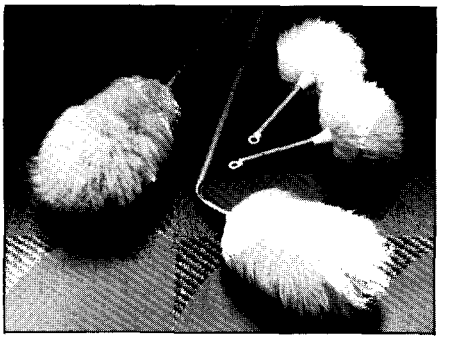
Most of the convenience waxes you buy contain detergents and silicone-additives that dry out the wood instead of nourishing it. What's the alternative? Our choice is Williamsville Wax, made according to a formula developed 200 years ago by Virginia cabinetmakers. It is made of beeswax and lemon oil, heat-blended with other natural oils in a mixture that is actually absorbed *into* the wood, preventing both dryness and wax build-up. It can be used on any type of wood, any type of finish, on paneling or kitchen cabinets as well as fine furniture. (As a bonus, it is also an excellent product for the care of leather.) Williamsville Wax is super for restoring damaged, neglected or mistreated wood. We can send two 8-oz. bottles — several months' supply since you use it sparingly — for **$12.00** ($1.95) #A736. Once you see how well it works, you may never use another wax again.

DUST-MAGNETS™



If we ever compile a book on *The Old Ways That Were Better Ways,* we will certainly include a chapter on lambswool dusters. On its own lambswool actually attracts and holds dust like a magnet. The static charge in the wool causes dust literally to leap off surfaces where it has accumulated, making these dusters just the thing for dusting bric-a-brac, china, crystal, pictures and other fragile items. The standard 27″ long duster costs **$7.00** ($1.95) #A780; the bent-handled model is **$8.00** ($1.95) #A781; two mini-dusters cost **$8.00** ($1.95) #A794. The entire group, a total of four dusters, is an exclusive *Tools for Living* offering and costs just **$16.00** ($2.95) #A783. Buying the group saves you $9.90, it's almost like getting one duster free!

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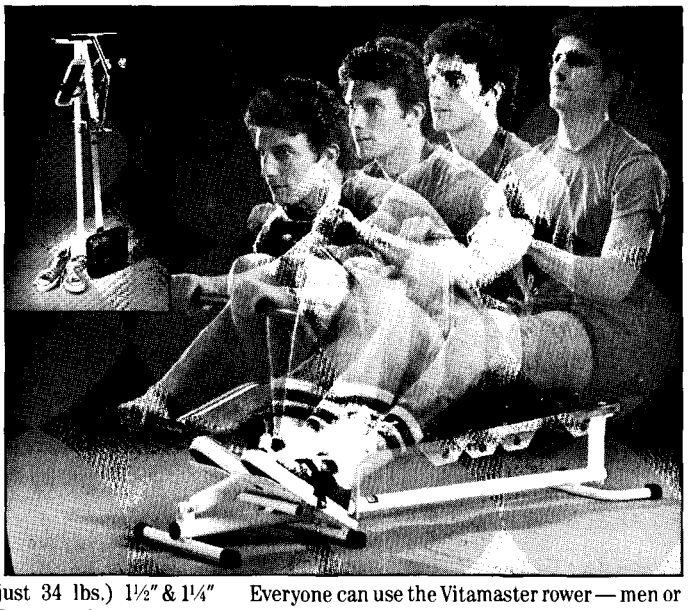

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Allowing for Exceptions

What is the domain of the film critic? Two recent statements offer definitions.

Last autumn the National Association of Theater Owners had a trade show in California, prominent in which was a display of the candy, pop, and popcorn available for theater concession stands. According to *The New York Times* of November 5, the sale of such items was expected to reach approximately $750 million last year. One president of a theater chain said that, without the sales at concession stands, theaters could not remain in business. Theaters expected to sell more than $3.6 billion in tickets last year, but more than half of that money would go to the distributors and makers of the films. The money earned at the concession stands belongs to the theater owners, and that money would be the profit margin.

So: the film critic's job is to comment on the material that provides the occasion for selling candy, pop, and popcorn. If the critic were to put first financial things first, he or she would criticize the items on sale at the concession stand; they are what keep the theater going, not the stuff inside on the screen, which is only a lure to get people in to buy the refreshments.

Another candid statement comes from Ned Tanen, who recently resigned as head of Universal Pictures. Interviewed in the British film journal *Sight and Sound* (Winter 1983/84), Tanen says that, of the eighteen or twenty pictures a year produced by a major studio, with luck two or three will make a profit. He is asked about the Classics divisions that most major studios have instituted to release "quality or foreign or independent films." He admits that this operation has some assets: it gives the studio a good image, it opens doors to people you might want to do business with, "It's a source of supplementary income so long as you don't kid yourself that it'll amount to much. . . . If one of those movies runs for forty weeks on the East Side of New York or thirty weeks in L.A. and the critics love it, what does it mean? Who the hell *cares*?" Later he says: "The audience has gotten older and I think that's good news. It'll allow you to make a few more movies which aren't about car racing or rites of passage, God help us. Basically, your audience is around 18-20, but it's not 14 anymore."

So: the critic, who spends time concentrating on the stuff that sells the popcorn, is expending enthusiasm, when possible, that has absolutely no effect on the people who make the decisions about film production. What's more, the maximum average intellectual age of the audience in general, whose discrimination the critic hopes to reach, is 20. (A new high.)

To me, those statements from the trade show and from Tanen are bracing.

First, the consolations of cold comfort. Compare the literary critic who writes regularly for a journal and who concentrates on fiction (which is the closest analogy to most film). That critic has to pick his or her way through mounds and mounds of novels that are figurative popcorn-sellers, the very novels that keep the bookshops and the wholesalers and the publishers in business. The current *Times* best-seller list of fifteen hardbound novels contains only three that would appeal to those of a mental age higher than 20; the current paperbound best-seller list of fifteen includes eleven that I wouldn't read if they were the only books washed up with me on a desert island.

The theater situation in New York is even worse for the theater critic (which, elsewhere, I also am). The number of trumpery new productions, on and off Broadway, is proportionately at least as high as the number of trumpery new films; the targeted intellectual level of most productions, especially on Broadway, cannot be higher than 20, even if it's in the heads of people two or three times that age. Most of the people I know whose minds I respect go to the New York theater with decreasing frequency, and I don't often have a reason to urge them otherwise.

The film critic's domain, therefore, doesn't seem to me arbitrarily more circumscribed or more dismal than that of the fiction or theater critic. Dross for dross, all the fields weigh in about the same. In possible effect on taste and on producers' ambitions, criticism in all three fields seems equal. The salutary effect of the popcorn statement and the Tanen bluntness is to make us see that some other fields, thought relatively sacrosanct, are not really superior to film.

But let's leave the negative, the defensive. In proportion of good work, the film world certainly does not lag behind the many new plays I see and those new novels that I have time to read. Limiting comment to the past year, I'd say that, excepting the Beckett plays, I've seen no new play and have read no new novel that I'd rank as high as, let alone higher than, *Tender Mercies*, *Ways in the Night*, *The Draughtsman's Contract*, or *Monty Python's The Meaning of Life*. I don't put *Berlin Alexanderplatz* and *Parsifal* on the list because they were based on renowned works, though, as sheerly cinematic achievements, they tower above any sheerly

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Le Crabe Tambour. Now in theatrical release. Strong, bristly story of French naval pride—in Vietnam, Algeria, the Atlantic—supremely well photographed by Raoul Coutard. (Reviewed 3/12/84)

Dear Maestro. Rivalry between two Italian conductors, 40, throws light on men's hierarchy of values. Fine work. (2/6/84)

Entre Nous. Diane Kurys's account of her father and mother and her mother's woman friend, though it skirts a deep moral issue, is superbly made. (2/27/84)

Tender Mercies. Back again. Exceptionally fine script (Horton Foote), direction (Bruce Beresford), acting (Robert Duvall and the others). A Texas singer, down and out—and after. (4/11/83)

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theatrical achievement of the year. And not all of these pictures have been failures by the popcorn or Tanen standards. The fact of the film matter is that experience contradicts theory, even theory derived from experience. Good films do get made, and not only abroad where costs are still much lower. Possibly some of last year's good films—I haven't listed all, domestic or foreign—were mistakes by the Tanen standard, were either failures or trivial successes. But even films made solely to make money often fail of their purpose, as Tanen tells us; and there *is* the occasional exception, the film made for some other reasons as well. (No film, Bergman or Bugs Bunny, is made without intent to earn money.)

The serious critic thrives on the exceptions. He or she enjoys, I hope, the enjoyable pictures of lesser intent: the viewer who gets no fun out of *Tootsie* or *The Grey Fox* isn't fully equipped to appreciate the films noted above. Still, the exceptions are what the serious critic hopes for, hangs in there for.

But then the human race thrives and survives by its exceptions. Any god, looking down from Olympus or Valhalla and judging by the general level of character and action, would have to conclude that humankind is a depressing spectacle. Its justification is in its exceptions; but the whole, generally sorry species has to exist in order to get the exceptions. Within one minuscule area of humankind's actions, the film field, the same ratio holds. The popcorn principle and the Tanen candor only underscore that the microcosm conforms to the macrocosm.

THE DOUBLE FELIX

The Twenty-Year Century: Essays on Economics and Public Policy by Felix G. Rohatyn

(Random House, 175 pp., $12.95)

BY MICHAEL KINSLEY

. . . Felix Rohatyn, the little stock-jobbing fixer from ITT who went to Kleindienst to get an anti-trust break for his wee, tiny, multi-billion dollar conglomerate . . .

Nicholas von Hoffman
The Washington Post, March 10, 1972

. . . Rohatyn was architect of the various schemes that held New York from default. That [1975] crisis left him with the nickname "Felix the Fixer" because of his arm-grabbing style of diplomacy and legendary powers of persuasion. . . .

Robert Kaiser and William Claiborne
The Washington Post, February 9, 1977

. . . I am, by temperament, a fixer of things. . . .

Felix Rohatyn, *The Twenty-Year Century* (advance review copies)

. . . I am, by temperament, an active negotiator. . . .

Felix Rohatyn, *The Twenty-Year Century* (final bound edition)

Rohatyn's progress from Felix the Fixer to Felix the Philosopher is one of the great public relations ascents of our time. The transformation has been so complete that even *The Washington Post* forgot along the way that he first hove into view (and got his nickname) as a minor figure in the Watergate scandal.

Rohatyn, then as now an investment banker at the firm of Lazard Frères, was the key adviser to ITT Chairman Harold Geneen in the 1960s merger blitzkreig that turned ITT into the king of the conglomerates. ITT's crowning acquisition was the Hartford Fire Insurance Company, but in 1969 the Justice Department filed suit to undo this deal. It was to be a test case of conglomerate merger. Then, in July 1971, the Justice Department unexpectedly announced a settlement that allowed ITT to keep Hartford.

Remember Dita Beard? She was an ITT Washington lobbyist. In February 1972, columnist Jack Anderson revealed a memo she had written shortly before the surprise settlement. The memo credited the happy ending to a $400,000 ITT contribution to the Republican Party. Acting Attorney General Richard Kleindienst immediately denied any connection between the payment and the settlement. He insisted that the head of the antitrust division, Richard McLaren, had handled the negotiations without interference. But Anderson then revealed that Rohatyn had met half a dozen times with Kleindienst himself to discuss the ITT settlement. It later came out that, during this period, Rohatyn also had met four times with Attorney General John Mitchell and twice with White House aide Peter Flanigan, sometimes on the same day as his meetings with Kleindienst. Mitchell implausibly insisted that the ITT case never came up in these talks. About this time, *The Washington Post* reported that Dita Beard and Felix Rohatyn were both on a Nixon reelection committee list of major Republican contributors.

When Jack Anderson's story broke, Dita Beard quickly fled, ostensibly for a vacation in Yellowstone National Park. She mysteriously took ill on the plane and ended up in a Denver hospital, complaining of chest pains and conveniently incommunicado. This is where E. Howard Hunt showed up in his famous ill-fitting red wig, to get a statement from her declaring that the memo was a fraud. With this, Dita Beard disappeared from history. Since Beard was unavailable, the Senate

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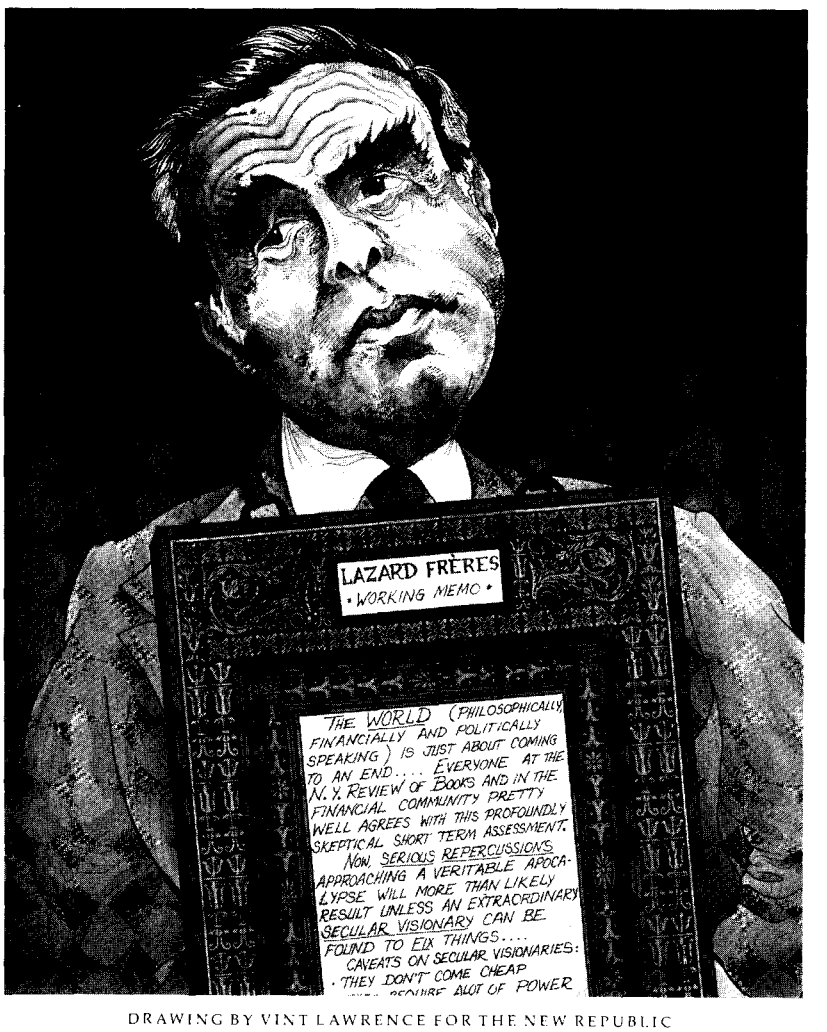
committee investigating the affair had only Rohatyn to rake over the coals. They never found any evidence connecting Rohatyn with the controversial payment, though his firm later signed a consent decree with the S.E.C. over another smelly aspect of the Hartford settlement. After the Nixon tapes came out (Nixon to Kleindienst: "The ITT thing—stay the hell out of it. Is that clear?"), Kleindienst ultimately pleaded guilty to misleading the Senators by denying White House interference in the ITT deal.

I. F. Stone, covering Rohatyn's Senate testimony for *The New York Review of Books*, complained that this notorious corporate operator "might have been Joe Blow off the sidewalks of New York as far as the senators seemed to be aware." That was 1972. In 1982 Senator Thomas Eagleton introduced a constitutional amendment to allow foreign-born citizens to become President. He was moved by "my unbounded admiration for the intellect and skills of Felix Rohatyn," born in Vienna. By then, testimony from Rohatyn had become a regular feature of Senate hearings on crucial issues. Even more amazing, verbatim reprints of Rohatyn's testimony had become a regular feature of *The New York Review of Books*.

Chuck Colson put Watergate behind him by finding religion. Felix Rohatyn has gone further: he has become a secular saint. He is simultaneously a leading member of the business community and the official investment banker of the New York left-wing intelligentsia. Colleges give him honorary degrees, politicians seek his advice, and columnists cite his pronouncements with reverence. His presence at a party is a social coup. (Charlotte Curtis in *The New York Times*: "The first course was caviar, and along about salad, Felix Rohatyn suggested that women might be smarter than men.") Only a very prestigious thinker indeed gets a major publishing house to put out a volume like the one under review, preserving in hard cover Rohatyn's articles, speeches, Congressional testimony, and sundry pensées of the past few years.

Rohatyn's reputation as more than just another investment banker has paid financial dividends, too. Lazard was "written off by its Wall Street competitors" in the mid-1970s, according to a recent biography of Rohatyn's mentor, André Meyer. Rohatyn's high profile has revived the firm's prestige and brought in new business. In particular, based on Rohatyn's role as head of the team that guided New York through its fiscal crisis, Lazard has developed a specialty in crisis management for troubled municipalities and corporations. Desperate officials scrape the bottom of their depleted treasuries to pay for a bit of Rohatyn's magic.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DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Rohatyn's fame as a financial alchemist has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The city of Detroit, for example, was in such desperate straits a while back that no one would buy its bonds. Bankruptcy loomed. A "trauma team" from Lazard was hired to help the city reorganize its finances. "Not that they come up with anything different" from what the city might do on its own, said one Detroit official, "but their very presence at the table lends credibility." Another official said, "There's no question the association with Lazard Frères helped convince banks" to buy Detroit's tattered bonds. It's almost a high-class protection racket: "Nice little bond issue you've got here. Sure would be a pity if no one would buy it." Governments commonly lend their credibility to private business ventures, but it's the rare individual who can personally lend credibility to sovereign governments. Rohatyn can.

How has he done it? Obviously his role in "saving" New York played a part, as do his proposals for saving the rest of mankind, which impress some people. But his reputation among literary intellectuals and journalists, at least, has other sources as well.

First, Rohatyn has diligently curried favor with these people, flattered them, invited them to his house in the Hamptons, and so on. It works. Shocking, but true. Many of these people are naive about financial matters, and easily dazzled. In a slavish *New Yorker* profile a year ago, Rohatyn described his first dealings with journalists during the New York fiscal crisis.

> A very interesting thing happened, which was very important to us, namely, the New York daily papers, which had the choice of putting their financial reporters or their political reporters on the story, put their political reporters on it. This

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meant that they had to be taught about finance, and I was the person they turned to to teach them.

Rohatyn's campaign got a boost from a changed attitude toward money, over the course of the 1970s, among the people he was trying to impress. Put simply, money became fashionable again. The longing Tom Wolfe had described as *nostalgie de la boue* (nostalgia for the mud) was replaced by something more like *nostalgie de l'argent*. Black Panthers out, investment bankers in. After all, imagine: here you are, used to being awestruck at somebody's $100,000 book advance, and you find yourself seated at dinner next to a man who just closed a deal worth $3 million in fees. And *he's* sucking up to *you*!

Another laughably easy way to help get yourself a reputation as a philosopher is to use the word "philosophical" a lot. Also "profound" (as in, "Today I am neither liberal nor conservative, but profoundly skeptical") and, for that matter, "skeptical." ("Skepticism is what is needed today—skepticism of easy solutions, of cant, of ideology of the left or right.") Refer to your own writings as "essays," not articles. Call other people "brilliant." The "essays" in *The Twenty-Year Century* reveal that Rohatyn has mastered all these techniques of literary social climbing.

But if you wish *The New Yorker* to say of you, "His articles [sic] have a casual eloquence, and convey the impression that a vast degree of cultivation and much careful thought underlie them," you must do more. It is not enough to merely say you are philosophical. You must be philosophical. You must write: "I am convinced that we can deal with our problems; in fact, I believe that in dealing with them we shall find our greatest opportunities." You must list "the basic issues for the future of the world." You must bemoan "the snapshot quality of television news." Although your book has nothing to do with the subject, you must declare in the introduction that "the notion that nuclear war is 'winnable' strikes me as utterly demented." And, just to be safe, you'd better stick in a warning near the end that, "The recent sharp increase in black and Hispanic voter registration . . . could have serious repercussions," though you needn't say what these are or what connection this thought has to those preceding and following it.

In fact, "Serious Repercussions" is the name of the game. Rohatyn sees them everywhere, which makes him seem very philosophical indeed. The very title of his book oozes foreboding. (It's misleading, though. The actual reference is not to the remainder of the twentieth century, but rather to Rohatyn's mundane observation that the "American Century," which Henry Luce predicted in 1941, pretty much ran its course between 1945 and 1965.) "I believe that what is at stake here," he writes, "is the future of democracy. We have tried liberalism; we are now trying conservatism. If we continue to be frustrated by the results, this could lead to political experiments much more extreme than anything we have witnessed so far. . . . "

Rohatyn's "philosophy," in a nutshell, is this. Life is like the New York City fiscal crisis. And doom is imminent on all fronts unless the normal processes of democracy and capitalism are suspended and someone like Felix Rohatyn is put in charge—temporarily. This is essentially what happened in New York. But Rohatyn didn't exactly save New York from bankruptcy. What he did (put in its best light) was skillfully administer a bankruptcy, to minimize the pain and spread it fairly. The city was already bankrupt in all but

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name, so there was no need to argue whether desperate measures were justified: they were inevitable. In these "essays," Rohatyn argues that the same is true of American basic industry, the banking system, the northeastern and midwestern states . . . in fact, the whole damned country, if not the world.

Unfortunately (for him, fortunately for the world), Rohatyn has weakened, rather than strengthened, his case that the end of the world is at hand by collecting his writings into a book. For example, according to Rohatyn:

> The United States today, like New York City in 1975, is on the edge of crisis. Financially, militarily, spiritually, we are like an airplane about to stall. . . . I do not believe that our society will stand the strain over the next four years. Our next President will face an emergency during his term of office, either internationally or domestically, possibly both. . . .

It requires a special kind of credulity to read, in 1984, these words written in 1980 (from a *New York Review* piece entitled "The Coming Emergency and What Can Be Done About It") and to believe them. In an introductory note, Rohatyn argues rather lamely that his prediction of an "emergency" came true when Mexico and Brazil almost defaulted on their bank loans. Were you hoping for something more sensational? Don't despair. In another piece, written just last August, Rohatyn promises disaster if the budget deficit isn't reduced before the 1984 election.

THROUGH AN excess of either hubris or humility, Rohatyn reprints various of his predictions that have turned out flatly wrong. He predicted in 1980 that another oil price rise "inevitably will result from the Iran-Iraq war." He predicted in 1981 that "the so-called rescue of Chrysler . . . is nevertheless doomed to failure, at a heavy cost to the taxpayers," because it was not part of a Rohatyn-style gargantuan industrial restructuring. At a press conference in February of this year, Rohatyn hailed Chrysler as "a spectacular success" and therefore proof that his kind of plan can work.

No change of circumstance allays Rohatyn's panic. Every development makes drastic action even more urgent. "At the time I wrote this essay," he says in his introduction to "The Coming Emergency" of 1980, "the value of the dollar was too low; now it is too high." Whatever. In 1979 he worried about inflation. Now, he says in reprinting that piece, it's "slow growth and deflation in the Third World." Today's problems are serious, of course. But you wonder about a doctor who prescribes the same cure, no matter what the disease.

And what about a doctor who insists that the cure is even more urgent if you're no longer sick? In 1981, Rohatyn worried that a feeble economy would erode the nation's commitment to social justice, with explosive political consequences. He wrote, "The 'zero-sum society' can be neither free nor fair." In 1984, he wrote, "I believe that economic recovery will bring the issue of fairness to the fore more starkly than in times of recession."

Rohatyn's cure is well known. He would create a "tripartite" board composed of leaders of labor, business, and government to supervise the revitalization of the American economy. The board's main tool would be a government agency, modeled after the old Reconstruction Finance Corporation, to invest in the private economy. The agency might start with $5 billion from the federal treasury and raise $50 billion in capital of its own. Its "expert staff" would decide which companies ought to get the money, and what conditions ought to be imposed. Conditions would include an equal amount of new investment by private capital, management changes, and labor concessions on wages and work rules. Besides providing money, this agency would be empowered to assist by "adjusting taxes and helping with international trade problems"—that is, by reducing taxes and restricting foreign competition.

The name for this is "industrial policy." The main difference between Rohatyn's industrial policy and other schemes carrying that label is where the money would go. Unlike the "Atari Democrats," Rohatyn is not interested in searching out "high-tech" or "sunrise" industries. Unlike Lester Thurow, he doesn't want to grease the wheels of change by helping workers to move and retrain for new jobs in different locations. Quite the opposite. Rohatyn's targets are America's war-horse industries and oldest regions: autos and steel, the Northeast and Midwest.

Rohatyn figures his scheme would requisition no more than $150 billion a year in public and private funds. "In a $3 trillion economy," he writes, "this hardly amounts to socialism." Hardly is right. This is the socialism of investment bankers.

THERE ARE two standard objections to this sort of thing, one from the right and one from the left. The objection from the right is that Rohatyn's arrangement would override the judgment of the market. If certain companies are in trouble and can't attract new capital, maybe there's a reason. Why should government "experts" be better at predicting what investments will pay off than people with their own money on the line?

Rohatyn insists that his plan "does not consist of either 'picking winners' or 'bailing out losers,' " but this is disingenuous. He is allocating capital. If the companies he helps don't turn out to be profitable "winners," then he will have been bailing out unprofitable "losers." Nothing in his plan increases the supply of credit available in the economy. It merely directs up to $150 billion a year of this credit (which would have been half of all business investment in 1983) to places it would not go if left alone. Someone—lots of someones—won't get that money who otherwise would have. The most likely squeeze-out victims are small businesses with ideas promising enough for the market to take a risk on, but too modest for Rohatyn's government agency to spot. If the capital markets think that a small entrepreneur is a better bet than U.S. Steel, why should the government interfere?

Rohatyn has an answer to this. "The answer is that the capital markets do not negotiate concessions among the various parties." He thinks his government agency can *make* its wards into profitable investments by forcing changes they would not make on their own, such as wage reductions. But forcing necessary changes in return for infusions of capital is exactly what investment bankers like Felix Rohatyn do much of the time, quite profitably. You don't need the government for that. You do need the government if you'd like to offer extra carrots like protectionism. But all experience and logic suggest that foreign competition is a better disciplinarian than the promise of protection from it. Lane Kirkland supports Rohatyn's scheme, but not because he thinks it will lead to wage reductions.

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Rohatyn rightly points out that the "free market" for capital is a bit of a myth. Right now the American economy labors under a mishmash of capital allocation policies, most of which make no sense, such as the investment tax credit (which subsidizes investment indiscriminately) and the consumer interest deduction (which directs credit away from investment and toward consumption). But Rohatyn doesn't propose to undo these. He just wants to layer his own scheme on top of them. And who can blame him for not wanting to wait for Congress to repeal the home mortgage deduction before he takes over the world?

THE MAIN objection to Rohatyn's proposal from the left is that it is anti-democratic. It would give unprecedented power to an unelected group of dignitaries chosen from established elites. Rohatyn finds the accusation a joke:

> This type of cooperation does not imply a sinister corporate-statist conspiracy at the expense of the public or of democratic accountability. Preserving the environment, occupational safety, consumer protection, affirmative action—these and many other issues central to the public interest can and should be an essential part of any arrangements by which business, labor, and government cooperate to save the economy.

. . . a response that misses the point thoroughly enough to prove it. In a democracy, the public interest is not supposed to be entrusted to distinguished worthies, however high-minded. It is supposed to be entrusted to elected officials. Everything is wrong with Rohatyn's "tripartite" equation. The American body politic is not composed of equal parts business, labor, and government. The heads of the largest corporations don't represent the true interests of American capital. The heads of the big unions don't represent the interests of all workers. Since when does capital get to vote anyway, let alone get an equal vote with the people? And, most especially, why should elected government be reduced to one-third of any power-sharing arrangement intended to protect "the public interest"?

Am I off-base to wonder what royalist language like this is doing in a supposedly left-wing journal like *The New York Review*?

> The fact of the matter is that our country today cannot muster a majority for anything except complaint. The body politic is so splintered and Balkanized that the impotence of the political establishment is a perfectly valid reflection of the negativism and lack of interest of the electorate.

Rohatyn has an answer to this one too. "To the cries of elitism or the fear of creating a new 'establishment,' I say that where we are going otherwise is infinitely worse." Sans moi, le deluge.

Rohatyn warns that "the automotive, steel, glass, rubber, and other basic industries" are collapsing. America will "become a nation of short-order cooks and saleswomen, Xerox operators and messenger boys." He asks:

> Is it rational, in the name of the mythical free market, to let our basic industries go down one after the other, in favor of an equally mythical "service society" in which everyone will serve everyone else and no one will be making anything?

Rohatyn worries equally about the regional shift from Snowbelt to Sunbelt. He calls it "one of the gravest events in our history," and warns that "half of this continent is turning into an underdeveloped country. . . ." He attributes "blame for these trends" to everything from "government regulation" to "a culture that idolizes rock stars." Pretty philosophical!

ROHATYN naturally exaggerates. America's basic industries are going through some rough times, but they are not collapsing. Charles Schultze of the Brookings Institution, the most prominent liberal critic of "industrial policy," points out that U.S. manufacturing output increased 37 percent during the 1970s, compared to a 33 percent average for the Western industrial democracies. With the economic recovery, the prospect for slimmed-down auto and steel companies is pretty good. Likewise, nothing is happening that will "divide the country into 'have' and 'have-not' regions." In fact, several southern states remain the poorest in the country, while New England enjoys a remarkable boom.

Nevertheless, there are some big changes going on in the American economy. More interesting than the way Rohatyn exaggerates the trends is the way he exaggerates the dangers they pose. The terribly conservative essence of Rohatyn's philosophy is fear of change. He would invest the leaders of today's elites with extraordinary power and money in order to preserve the industrial, geographic, and financial status quo.

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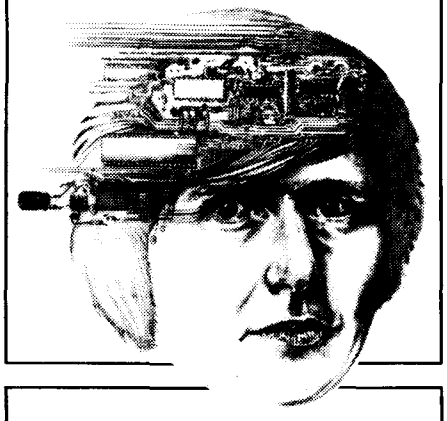

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Rohatyn's fashionable critique of the "service society" is a good example of needless scaremongering. The shift into services is a sign of prosperity: services are what people want to buy. Rohatyn should look at his own life. As he became richer, did he buy more products made of steel, rubber, and glass, or did he go in for more restaurant meals, vacations, and personal attention? Rohatyn is right to deplore the waste of human brainpower in fields like law (and investment banking?), which shuffle paper and add nothing to general well-being. But a lot of crap comes out of factories, too. There is nothing inherently unproductive about services as opposed to manufactured items.

Productivity growth is slower in the service sector than in manufacturing, because it's not as easy with services to increase output by adding capital. But the shift of labor and capital from manufacturing to services clearly increases their productivity. It wouldn't be happening if the payoff weren't better. National prosperity is bound to improve as a result. There is legitimate reason to worry about how that prosperity will be distributed, if the effect of the shift is to eliminate middle-class blue-collar jobs and to replace them with a few high-paid glamour spots and lots of drudgery at the minimum wage. But thwarting economic growth in the name of economic justice is always self-defeating. Indeed, this is one of Rohatyn's themes: "Without the capacity to create wealth, it is impossible to deal with the issue of fairness. . . . Only with sustained economic growth . . . will [economic] disparities disappear."

IT IS HARDER to be cheerful about the regional shift, which is causing a lot of local tragedies and brings no obvious net benefit to the country as a whole. Rohatyn is right that we make the problem worse with an insane federal system that allows people and companies to molt their social obligations as they slither off to new places. All we can say for sure is that America's growth has been a series of wrenching transformations, and cries of alarum usually seem foolish in retrospect. Seventy years ago, Rohatyn would have been denouncing the migration from farms to cities. How can we abandon an industry that employs half the population and produces the very stuff of survival? Where will these people get jobs and housing? How can America build its future on frivolities like automobiles when it won't even be able to feed itself? And so on.

AN ODD ITEM on Rohatyn's agenda is the plight of international banks. "This was a subject that had troubled me for some time, but about which I was loathe to write," he explains. "I decided, however, that the problem would not go away" without his intervention. Failure to solve it, he concluded, could lead to (what else?) "serious repercussions."

The problem is that the major banks have ineptly loaned billions of dollars to nations in the Third World and the Eastern Bloc which will never pay it back. If this brute fact were acknowledged on their books, many of the banks would be bankrupt. To prevent this, Rohatyn proposes that his American redevelopment agency, or an international equivalent financed by the Western governments, should supply the banks with extra capital and/or take over some of these bad loans. The loans would be stretched out and the banks would fess up to some serious losses, but the taxpayers would swallow some of the cost in order to avoid the risk that a default or two could set off a dangerous spiral of chaos.

So far, this is vintage Felix: for God's sake, keep all the balls in the air at any cost. Some people (capitalists and anti-capitalists alike) may think it's unhealthy to save capitalists from their own stupidity, but these people don't recognize the Serious Repercussions.

What's odd is that in an article on Polish debts, Rohatyn pulls a great switcheroo. He urges the West to declare Poland's overdue loans in default and force the nation into bankruptcy. His very sound reasoning is that this is the best way to stop subsidizing Soviet repression. In making this case, though, Rohatyn accidentally refutes his adjacent case that disaster waits if we don't bail out the banks.

"The arguments against default . . . do not withstand scrutiny," he writes. "The fact is that Poland is bankrupt, with no visible hope of meeting its future obligations. . . ." He more or less says the same of some Third World countries and the banks that have lent to them, but in those cases Rohatyn puts a great premium on preventing the appearance of bankruptcy from catching up with the reality. "What of the possible danger to Western banks?"

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Well, the biggest suckers were German banks, and even they "clearly have no liquidity problem, since the Polish loans are paying interest late and paying no principal at all." That is, the loans are bad and the banks are still in business, so where's the crisis? "What is involved here," Rohatyn says with an airy dismissive wave, "is . . . essentially accounting problems." Yes, there will have to be large write-offs. "But the Polish loans already are bad loans; declaring Poland in default will not make them worse." Exactly.

In the course of a chapter that appeared previously as a commencement address, as Congressional testimony, *and* as an "essay" in *The New York Review*, Rohatyn endorses that most boring of all political ideas, "four to eight years of a bipartisan Administration in which a Republican or a Democratic President would include opposition leaders in his cabinet and would appoint a genuinely representative group" of distinguished leaders to direct the economy. He is sincere. He thinks that if all the top people can sit around a table "allocating sacrifice" (the title of that hagiographic *New Yorker* profile), they can prevent things from getting out of hand. Twelve years ago, Rohatyn only hung around with corporate types. But now, he's come to treasure the wisdom of the best people in all walks of life. And with that, his journey from fixer to philosopher is over.

THE WRONG STUFF

The March of Folly
by Barbara W. Tuchman

(Knopf, 428 pp., $17.95)

Barbara Tuchman has again tried something new. In fact, she has tried something that few, if any, historians have ever tried before. She has written a number of vastly successful books on a single subject; her previous book, *Practicing History*, consisted of essays and articles on different subjects. The present book, however, is made up of different subjects on a single theme. The theme is "folly" in high places. The subjects are the Trojan Horse, the Renaissance popes, the American Revolution, and the Vietnam War. The theme is the only thing that gives purpose and unity to the entire work. If it were not for Tuchman's implacable pursuit of folly in each of them, the reader would be faced with four little books instead of one big book.

Whatever specialists may think of each segment, the project as a whole is something of a *tour de force*. The longest and, to my mind, the best of the case histories, on the Vietnam War, obviously inspired the other three, as a means of putting our own rulers' follies in long-range historical perspective. This is the historical equivalent of a *roman à clef* or a morality play. Erasmus praised folly sardonically; Tuchman comes to bury it, or at least to attack it with deadly seriousness. She is quite as wrathful about the depravity of the Renaissance popes as she is about the iniquity of Richard M. Nixon.

Not the least merit of Tuchman's book is that she makes one think seriously of the persistence of folly throughout history. Her method is mainly narrative, with a nudge now and then about the foolishness of past and present official policy. Most of her analysis of the phenomenon comes at the beginning and the end. To start with, she regards folly as "the pursuit by governments of policies contrary to their own interests" and "contrary to the way reason points and enlightened self-interest suggests." She stipulates three criteria for folly. The policy must be perceived as "counterproductive" in its own time, not merely in hindsight. It should be the policy of a group, not merely of an individual ruler. And a feasible alternative course of action must have been available.

Each of these criteria presents some problems. The problems tend to be buried in the mass of details, the procession of events, the narrative flow. One admires Tuchman's ability to assimilate, organize, and dramatize enormous gobs of disparate material. She never ceases to be vivid and vigorous. Most readers will be carried along by her storytelling art. For long stretches, however, the moral of her tales is virtually lost in the lengthy retelling of the tales themselves.

SINCE Tuchman does not pretend to do much more than go over well-trodden scholarly ground, though from a particular point of view, the work as a whole must be judged on how well that point of view is exemplified by her choice of case histories. Of the four, only one struck me as clearly satisfactory. Stimulating an argument about what may or may not be "folly," in her sense of the term, may well be one of the chief contributions of the book.

It was a bold move to start off with the story of the Trojan Horse. Tuchman says she chose it because it is "the prototype of all tales of human conflict" and that "all of human experience" is in it. This excessive use of "all" might suggest a limited acquaintance with tales of human conflict and with human experience, if Tuchman had not been straining to promote the relevance of her Trojan exemplar to her main theme. What makes the choice of the story bold is that it is clearly legendary, and thus at best belongs in a mythological rather than a historical context. To appreciate why the Trojans did not try to burn or break the horse, despite those who pleaded with them to do so, it is necessary to think within the Trojan system of beliefs. Otherwise the Trojan tragedy becomes too simpleminded and even uninteresting.

Superficially, the Trojan failure to act satisfies Tuchman's criteria. There were those, such as Laocoön and Cassandra, who warned of the consequences. If the majority of Trojans had ignored them merely because they were too stupid to realize the danger, the story would have been too one-sided to excite the imagination of later centuries. The gods were ultimately responsible in the legendary foundation of the story for Laocoön's punishment and Cassandra's plight.

The lesson Tuchman draws is that "Laocoön was fatally punished for perceiving the truth and warning of it." This interpretation simplifies the disagreement into one between purely hu-

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man intelligence and obtuseness. Another way of reading the story would make it far more complex. The Trojans had to choose between their gods and their common sense. If we deprive them of common sense, except for Laocoön and Cassandra, there is no dramatic contest or tragic dimension. The majority of Trojans were caught in a truly fearful dilemma—to choose between their most profound religious faith and their human sense of self-preservation. To obey the gods, the Trojans had good reason to reject Laocoön and Cassandra even though they were right. Such a tragic choice is not all that uncommon in human affairs, if we substitute sacrificing ourselves in higher cause for the price they paid of submission to their gods.

Tuchman vainly tries to take the story out of its mythical and legendary context by instructing us not to forget "that the gods (or God, for that matter) are a concept of the human mind" and that "it was not fate but free choice that took the Horse within the walls." In effect, she wants us to read the story within our own belief-system rather than that of the Trojans. What was fate to them may well be folly to us. But in that case are we not saying something about ourselves rather than about them?

TUCHMAN'S second case gave me even more trouble. Her six Renaissance popes, from 1470 to 1530, were monsters of corruption, depravity, and self-aggrandizement. She fills about seventy-five pages with their crimes, scandals, and extravagances. From their point of view, they were true to themselves and to their times. In the end, they made their church infamous and thus helped to provoke the "Protestant Secession." This was their folly, as Tuchman sees it. In this case, Tuchman observes, "folly, in one of its aspects, is the obstinate attachment to a disserviceable goal." But the disserviceable goal here was that of the church as an enduring institution, about which these popes could not have cared less, not that of their own self-interest, which totally absorbed them. In a short epilogue, Tuchman virtually recognizes that their alleged "folly" must be judged unhistorically. She writes:

> They were so imbued by the rampant greed and grab and uninhibited self-gratification of their time that a rational response to the needs of their constituency was almost beyond their scope. It would have required a culture of different values.

And again: "The Papacy's folly lay not so much in being irrational as in being totally estranged from its appointed task."

IN EFFECT, in order to convict these popes of folly it is necessary to judge them from the perspective of a different culture and in terms of a task which they did not accept. A question then arises. For whom was this folly "counterproductive"? Not for these popes; they suffered not at all from their presumed "folly." The church suffered because it was the kind of church it was, not merely because these popes were foolish. The problem here is whether "folly" is the right word for this kind of behavior. In any event, the case of the Renaissance popes differs from that of the next two examples of historical folly, which hit back at those who actually committed it and did not require "a culture of different values." If the term is stretched too far, it loses its special sense of self-deception and self-penalization. The Renaissance popes were guilty of something less than folly in their own times and of something more than folly from a later perspective.

The American Revolution presents still another problem. In this section of about one hundred pages, Tuchman concentrates on the British side of the story because, she states, "it was on that side that policy contrary to self-interest was pursued." She enlivens the narrative with a choice assortment of anecdotes, personalities, and trivia. The main impression left by this emphasis on the British cast of characters is that they lost America because they were incompetent and venal. That there were plenty of such British ministers and officials cannot be denied; blunders and miscalculations abounded. But they hardly exhaust the main issue, which is whether it was mere "folly" for the British to try to retain the American colonies at all costs.

John Adams once advised the Abbé de Mably that it was necessary to start a history of the American Revolution with the period before 1761. Tuchman chose to start with the period after the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763, which was followed two years later by the struggle over the Stamp Act and all that. By ignoring Adams's advice and starting so late, however, Tuchman cut herself off from accounting for the deeper motives of, and the grounds for, post-1763 British policy. The lifeblood of the British economy—commerce—had become vitally dependent on the American colonies by 1763. The loss of the colonies was regarded as the certain cause of Britain's economic ruin and downfall as a great power. The colonial assemblies had long dominated and humiliated the royal governors. The entire British colonial structure was a rickety façade. The very term "colonies" is one of the most fertile sources of popular misconceptions of the pre-Revolutionary period. British officials and administrators—not all of them incompetents or nincompoops—had for decades deemed repeated demonstrations of colonial recalcitrance to be portents of a coming struggle for independence. There was no way for the British to concede on the issue of the right of Parliament to legislate for the colonies without conceding the power of the colonies to rule themselves *de facto* if not *de jure*. After more than a century and a half of British colonial sovereignty, then, it was more than personal "folly" that accounted for the last-ditch British effort to regain control.

Tuchman suggests that the British would have done better to have followed the lead of the elder William Pitt, later Earl of Chatham, or of Edmund Burke. Chatham, as she recognizes, was willing to give way only on the issue of taxation, not on that of parliamentary supremacy in all other spheres, including colonial trade and the stationing of British troops. In effect, he advocated a policy which satisfied neither side and was far better suited to the oratory of a dying man than to a struggle over the locus of real power in the colonies. Burke dodged the issue of sovereignty by advocating an England possessed of "the sovereignty but not exercising it," as Tuchman puts it. The Burkean formula, at any rate, pointed to what the essential issue was—where the exercise of sovereignty or power in the colonies was to be located. For Tuchman, Britain's folly was to reject Burke's plea "for expediency rather than the token display of authority." Expediency, however, had been the British policy for half a century before 1763; as a result British governments were faced with the choice of a token display of authority or the real thing. The supreme folly, from the point of view of British self-interest,

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may well have been that the British did not decide to change course earlier, when their chances of success would have been far greater.

The British stakes in the American Revolution were so great that "folly" seems to be an odd term for the British determination not to give up control without a struggle. One may agree with Tuchman that plenty of follies were committed by the British in the way they went about it. That is not the same thing, however, as writing off the entire struggle for power as mere "folly." The ultimate folly could have been avoided only if the British had agreed to give up effective power in advance, a policy which no British government could have adopted and survived. Fighting in what one believes to be a life-and-death matter deserves some other status than "folly."

THAT IS THE critical difference between the American Revolution and the Vietnam War. Tuchman needs only about 150 pages to cover the ground from Franklin D. Roosevelt's initial desire to make Indochina independent to the final debacle managed by Richard M. Nixon and Henry A. Kissinger. For all that has been written about the Vietnam War, she tells the story freshly, masterfully, unsparingly. Only in this segment was I convinced that her organizing concept was fully warranted. Much harsher things could be said about this most stupid and ignominious war in American history; folly must surely be one of the kindest.

The hapless Trojans and the outrageous popes came out of worlds so far away and so different from the modern era that the test of Tuchman's central concept must rest, if at all, with the similarity between the American Revolution and the Vietnam War. In at least one respect, they were related; both were lost causes. Clearly, however, not every defeat can be written off as folly; one can lose in a good or necessary cause as well as in a bad or needless one. Follies are committed in all struggles on all sides. The critical question here is whether it was folly to fight at all.

On this question hinges the difference between the British loss of the American colonies and the American failure in Vietnam. The two strike me as incommensurable and incongruous. The colonies were breaking away after a century and a half of the British connection, a rupture long considered on all sides as mutually destructive and unthinkable. The British had come to believe that their prosperity and greatness were at stake in America. Nothing remotely like this kind of crisis faced the United States in Vietnam. Tuchman rightly notes that the American stake in Vietnam was so slight from every material and strategic point of view that the only reason for going on was that we had blundered into it and, as Tuchman says, "the stake had become America's exercise of power and its manifestation called 'credibility.' " Not able to justify a war in and for Vietnam, we had to resort to imaginary "falling dominoes," from Indochina to India and beyond, to give those eight years of human sacrifice and material expenditure a semblance of "credibility." The American Revolution was a real threat to the British, whatever blundering and bungling may have accompanied their efforts to deal with it. The Vietnam War was fought on behalf of an unreal threat, and was not worth the effort even if it had been waged with less blundering and bungling.

Thus I came away from Tuchman's book with mixed feelings. It attempts to cope bravely with a great and hazardous theme, but doesn't manage to avoid all the pitfalls. In the end, Tuchman is not too hopeful that the march of folly will ever come to an end. Her last words are: "We can only muddle on as we have done in those same three or four thousand years, through patches of brilliance and decline, great endeavor and shadow."

THEODORE DRAPER

Theodore Draper is the author, most recently, of *Present History: On Nuclear War, Detente & Other Controversies* (Vintage).

DO NOT GO GENTLY

An Interrupted Life: The Diaries of Etty Hillesum, 1941-1943 translated by Arno Pomerans edited by J. G. Gaarlandt

(Pantheon, 226. pp., $12.95)

She has already been likened to Simone Weil, this young Dutch Jewess whose recently published diary spans the fateful years 1941-1943, and stops abruptly with her death in Auschwitz at the age of 29. The comparison highlights the differences. No fierce ascetic bent on self-immolation, Etty Hillesum is an exuberant celebrant of life. In her first entry she describes herself as an accomplished bedfellow with a varied erotic past. She has other impressive accomplishments. A lawyer, a gifted linguist, obviously talented, determined to be a writer yet unsure of her direction, she could be a contemporary liberated woman beset by traditional and untraditional perplexities about marriage, career, sex, love. Much of the diary could be dated 1984 without loss of credibility, though current feminists would resent such heresies as her worry that a woman may be handicapped because she "longs for a man not mankind." And her funny, poignant description of sessions with her therapist, a remarkable German Jewish refugee twice her age who becomes her moral guide and lover, almost brings to mind the techniques of later encounter groups in Southern California: wrestling matches in which both are physically aroused, then spiritually fulfilled by reading Thomas à Kempis.

Yet, the significance of the diary lies not in its honest self-portrait of a remarkable young woman or in her fascinating relationship to her curious mentor. It lies in the time in which the love story is cast. How does this young woman react to the events of which she is a part? Though probing into the psyche of the Jewish victims has become a literary industry often pursued with more obtuseness than imaginative understanding, the question is inevitable.

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Critics have hailed this diary for being no run-of-the-mill catalogue of horrors, for sparing the reader the danger of being tormented by still another recital of intolerable suffering. This dubious compliment is only partly merited. To the usual questions, Etty provides unusual, baffling answers. In contradistinction to the memoirs of survivors, unrevised Holocaust diaries have the tension of dramatic irony; the actors are ignorant, the readers, knowing. In the case of Etty, the prescient reader, who notes the dates on the successive pages, cannot help wondering at which point her joyous affirmation of the beauty and goodness of life will falter.

By 1941 the anti-Jewish measures of the Nazi occupiers of Holland are in full swing, but Etty, sheltered in a household of warm Christian friends, is as yet spared the direct impact of the terror. At this stage, in an early entry, she can write: "I am sometimes so distracted by all the appalling happenings round me that it's far from easy to find the way back to myself. And yet that's what I must do. I mustn't let myself be ground down by the misery outside." The rose on her desk or a poem by Rilke (her great literary passion) are as "real and important" as any outer circumstance. Even on the day that she must report to the Gestapo she records first her pleasure in a cup of genuine Van Houten's cocoa and some bread and honey she has just eaten "with what you may call abandon." Then she adds,

> I opened the Bible this morning at random but it gave me no answers this morning. Just as well because there were no questions, just enormous faith and gratitude that life should be so beautiful, and that makes it a historic moment, *that* and not the fact that S. [her lover] and I are on the way to the Gestapo.

Willful bravado or a consistent philosophy? It will become the latter.

At the Gestapo office she feels compassion for the brutal German officer who harasses helpless Jews, and she fights the temptation to hate the Germans. "Every atom of hate we add to this inhospitable world makes it more inhospitable." Whenever she wavers, she returns more firmly to her insistence on life's beauty. On the day that Jews are compelled to wear yellow stars, she notes one man's defiant gesture: "He was wearing a huge golden star, wearing it triumphantly on his chest. . . . All that yellow—I suddenly had a poetic vision of the sun rising above him, so radiant and smiling did he look." Fortunately she has the good sense to add an earthy corrective: "Come now, Etty, my girl, things aren't as congenial as you make out, and you really seem to gloss things over with your flights of poetry."

Does she blaspheme by prettifying the monstrous, by declaring that a sprig of jasmine, a walk along the canal, a Rilke poem, are experiences as intense as her awareness of the concentration camps across the border? On the last night of 1941 she takes stock of the evening's satisfactions: a gas fire, red and yellow tulips, a piece of chocolate, her lover, and her books. Nineteen forty-one has been the richest, most fruitful, and the "happiest" of all. Heroism, or an aesthete's egoism?

As restrictions against Jews multiply, she continues to recite her self-centered idyll; whatever the space there is room enough for music and love. She wants to counsel a bereaved friend:

> Yes, life is beautiful and I value it anew each day even though I know that the sons of mothers, and you are such a mother, are being murdered in concentration camps. . . . Do not relieve your feelings through hatred, do not seek to be avenged on all German mothers, for they too sorrow at this moment for their slain sons.

Big Poppy

Whiskery, animal shank! Barbarous leaves!
Hot-eyed, Mafia Queen!
At the trim garden's edge

She sways toward August.
A Bumble Bee
Clambers into her drunken, fractured goblet—

Up the royal carpet of a down-hung,
Shrivel edged, unhinged petal—her first-about-to-fall.
He's in there as she sways. He utters thin

Sizzling bleats of difficult enjoyment.
Her carnival paper skirts, luminous near-orange,
Embrace him helplessly.

Already her dark pod is cooking its drug.
Every breath imperils her. Her crucible
Is falling apart with its own fierceness.

A fly, cool, rests on the flame-fringe.

Soon she'll throw off her skirts
And enter monastic afterlife

Bleeding internally
Her stupefying nectar into her own
Coffin—the cradle of her offspring.

Then we shall say;
"She wore herself in her hair, in her day,
And we could see nothing but her huge flop of petal,

Her big, lewd bold eye, in its sooty lashes,

And a stripped, athletic leg, hairy,
In a fling of abandon—"

Ted Hughes

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Yet just when the ordinary reader loses patience with her high-minded detachment, she becomes sufficiently self-critical to wonder whether she is so philosophical because so far she is little affected personally.

AT THE SAME time it would be unjust to minimize her emotional involvement. As information of the carnage in Poland reaches Amsterdam, she reasserts her credo: "I am with the hungry, with the ill-treated and the dying every day, but I am also with the jasmine and the piece of sky beyond my window; there is room for everything in a single life. For belief in God and for a miserable end." To prepare for the miserable end she prudently visits a dentist and packs a small bag leaving room for Rilke and the Bible, but she still does not believe, despite the rumors, that the Germans are engaged in a calculated extermination program. She expects to be shipped to a "labor camp" whose cruelties may result in death. She naively begins to train for coming hardships by drinking buttermilk instead of cocoa for breakfast. The one reality her imagination cannot encompass is that of the gas chamber.

As her mood darkens, she cries out, "And if God does not help me to go on, then I shall have to help God!" Her dialogue with God, her religious transcendence, account for the great impression this diary made in Holland when it appeared in 1981. Affiliated neither with synagogue nor church, and not a mystic in the strict sense, Etty escapes categories. A revealing sentence betrays her unconventional religiosity: "I hold a silly, naive, or deadly serious dialogue with what is deepest inside me which for the sake of convenience I call God." Yet despite this ambiguous definition, her prayers use the terms of the simple believer: "Oh, God, times are too hard for frail people like myself. I know that a new and kinder day will come. I would so much like to live on, if only to express all the love I carry within me. And there is only one way of preparing for the new age. By living it in our hearts."

Her spiritual evolution has setbacks. Despite her contempt for the Jewish Council whose role in the deportations she excoriates, she briefly accepts a job with the Council in the hope of a respite. Though she dreamed of being "a center of peace in that madhouse," she finds intolerable the actual contact with desperate human beings pleading for delay in their transfer to supposed labor camps. After a few weeks she joins, of her own accord, a transport of Jews to Westerbrok, a Dutch transit camp that is the final stop before Auschwitz. "I want to be sent to every one of the camps that lie scattered all over Europe. . . . I don't ever want to be safe. . . . I want to fraternize with my so-called enemies."

In Westerbrok she meditates on how she will live "out there," the unknown destination, and she comforts herself with the reflection that Dostoyevsky spent four years in a Siberian prison with inadequate sanitary arrangements and only the Bible for reading matter. Alternating between visions of destruction and plans for the new world she will help remake, she searches for a "great redeeming formula" and speculates that there will be "enough space to fold two hands in prayer." If in one mood she sounds irritatingly like Pippa Passes, "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world," in another she has the insight to pray, "Oh, God, give me the strength to bear the suffering you have imposed on me and not just the suffering I have chosen for myself."

HER final communication is a long letter to her Christian friends in Amsterdam. In Amsterdam she had proudly declared that she would be no chronicler of horrors. She cannot keep the promise. Her overwhelming, detailed description of wailing babies and children dragged away in the deportation of a thousand Jews from Westerbrok is, except for its literary power, a characteristic Holocaust document. "So that's what hell is like." No assertion that life is beautiful, or expressions of compassion for the Nazis who conduct the operation, appear in this long account. And the only reference to God is impious, "God Almighty, what are you doing to us?" Yet the letter concludes with a bewildering assurance, "I am firmly resolved to return to you after my wanderings." She was herself soon deported to Auschwitz with her parents and her younger brother, a musical prodigy. All perished, Etty in three months.

In Westerbrok, in a phrase reminiscent of Donne's "naked, thinking heart," she had prayed to be the "thinking heart of the barracks." Did God die for her in Auschwitz or did she continue to be sustained by what was "deepest" inside her? There is no escaping the reflection that her generosity of spirit and religious exaltation had not been tested to the utmost before Auschwitz. Critics heartened by the comforting difference between this diary and other Holocaust memoirs ignore the fact that the life of a Dutch Jew situated like Etty bore no resemblance to existence in the ghettos of Eastern Europe. No rivers of blood flowed in Amsterdam and the streets were not littered with corpses. Roundups of Jews took place openly in the West, but the ultimate exhibitions of savagery were saved for Poland. The death camps operated behind a barricade of secrecy; the Nazis had a discreet regard for the squeamish West. Yet Etty was not unique in her struggle against dehumanization. The great diarists of the Warsaw ghetto, the orthodox scholar, Chaim Kaplan, and the secular historian, Emanuel Ringelblum, record a hell of which the final scene in Westerbrok is a mild intimation. In 1940, after the establishment of the ghetto, the pious Kaplan permits himself the Job-like outcry, "But He Who sits in heaven laughs." Ringelblum engages in no theodicy; he is drawing up an arraignment before the bar of history. In No-

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vember of 1941, Etty's "happiest" year, Ringelblum writes, "Tonight I heard a tot of three or four yammering. The child will probably be found frozen to death tomorrow morning. . . . Frozen children are becoming a general phenomenon." Still, on another page he rejoices in the ghetto's "intense cultural activity." Ringelblum's detailed account of the ghetto's clandestine intellectual life, maintained as a conscious moral effort in the midst of bestial conditions, illuminates a generally ignored aspect of Jewish resistance.

Children wrote poems for the *Gazeta Zydowska*. One such by "Martha" read:

> I must be saving these days
> I have no money to save . . .
> I must save my nerves
> And my thoughts, and my mind,
> and the fire of my spirit
> I must be saving of tears that flow . . .
> There is so much I need in my life
> Warmth of feeling and a kind heart . . .
> All these, the gifts of God, I wish to keep.

These were the words of an anonymous girl who probably shared Etty's fate.

A diary that may be compared with Etty Hillesum's is Moshe Flinker's. He was the precocious son of a well-to-do businessman who fled from Holland to live openly with his family in Brussels on an Aryan permit. Only sixteen when he begins his diary in November, 1942, and without Etty's worldly sophistication, Moshe is just as intellectually zealous and morally obsessed. A deeply religious Orthodox Jew, he immerses himself in Hebrew books, and even begins to study Arabic because after the war he intends to be a Jewish statesman in "the Land of Israel" where "we shall have to live in peace with our brothers, the sons of Ishmael, who are also Abraham's descendants." The Flinkers who tried to brave it out in Belgium were betrayed, like the Franks who hid in Amsterdam, by an informer. Etty, who probably passed Anne Frank's secret apartment on her walks, was reproached for passivity because she refused to flee or go into hiding.

The diaries of the marvelous young deepen the sense of loss and tease the mind with possibilities. Had Etty survived Auschwitz would she have become an avenging spirit like Beate Klarsfeld, or perhaps a sorrowing figure transcending hate like Nelly Sachs, now honored in Germany as the poet of reconciliation? No systematic religious thinker, she would not likely have developed into a minor Simone Weil. In any case the comparison does Etty an injustice in a crucial respect: Weil's saintly compassion for human suffering did not extend to the Jews. (In 1940 when anti-Jewish decrees were promulgated in occupied France, Weil, instead of identifying with the persecuted as she had done in other instances, promptly sought to disassociate herself from her Jewish origin. Seeking a teaching post from which she was barred as a Jew, she assured the Minister of Public Education in a singularly graceless letter that she felt no bond with the Israelites.) Etty, on the other hand, with no doctrinaire commitments, from an equally assimilated background, studied St. Matthew and drew closer to her people the more they suffered.

An Interrupted Life is a selection from a much longer diary entrusted by Etty to Dutch friends before her deportation. No publisher could be found until 1980, when it came into the hands of its devoted editor, J. G. Gaarlandt. Perhaps the success of the book—it is being translated into many languages—will encourage the publication of the complete text.

MARIE SYRKIN

Marie Syrkin is professor emerita of humanities at Brandeis University. She is the author most recently of *The State of The Jews* (New Rebublic Books/Holt, Rinehart and Winston).

Reconsideration: Elizabeth Taylor

ALMOST AUSTEN

BY WILLIAM PRITCHARD

ELIZABETH TAYLOR'S first novel, *At Mrs. Lippincote's*, was published in 1946; *Blaming*, her last one, appeared thirty years later, posthumously (she died in 1975). In the interim of steady work, she produced thirteen novels and four volumes of stories. She was increasingly referred to with respect, invariably compared to Jane Austen ("the modern man's Jane Austen," said Arthur Mizener), and—certainly in this country—never taken very seriously. Perhaps the misfortune of her name had something to do with it, since the other Elizabeth Taylor (English too, but with all those husbands) took up so much space. The novelist Taylor had but one husband (the director of a sweet factory) and lived with him until her death. She herself was a child of unextraordinary circumstances, the daughter of a Reading insurance agent. She attended the Abbey School in Reading where she wrote plays and failed maths; then worked as a governess for a time until she settled down with John William Kendall Taylor, living in Buckinghamshire in the Thames Valley and practicing her craft. Elizabeth Jane Howard, a fellow novelist, remembers her "seated in a big chair . . . writing her novels in beautiful longhand, breaking off whenever one of her two children wanted attention."

The previous quotation and information is from Susannah Clapp's excellent introduction to *The Sleeping Beauty*, one of four Taylor novels recently brought out by Dial Press in the "Virago Modern Classics" series. She might have been amused at being chosen a Virago author, since there is little of the "termagant" or the "scold," indeed very little "man-like" or "heroic" (all synonyms from the Oxford Dictionary), in her novelistic presence. Consider some sentences describing the relationship between the recently widowed Isabella (in *The Sleeping Beauty*, 1953) and her friend, Evalie Hobson:

> She and Isabella had only a superficial acquaintance, but this made it all the more precious to both of them. Talk skimmed along, chocolates were chosen from the box, tea drunk, sherry sipped. Scrawled notes passed between them, handbags were rummaged through for

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recipes and diet sheets. They met middle-age together—a time when women are necessary to one another—and all the petty but grievous insults of greying hair, crowsfeet, and the loathed encumbrances of unwanted flesh, seemed less sordid when faced and fought (though fought spasmodically and with weak wills) gaily together. . . . They counted up calories, bought new corsets and tried face-creams; cut paragraphs out of magazines for one another and went together to the Turkish baths. They remained the same—two rather larkish schoolgirls. This they realized and it was the piteous part to them of growing old.

This is from what Susannah Clapp calls, in her introduction, Elizabeth Taylor's most romantic novel. Yet as is clear from the above piece of nicely poised, affectionate satire, the social mode, the civilized voice of placement and illustration, are very much to the fore. Compared to such writing, Taylor's female precursors in modern British fiction—Virginia Woolf and Elizabeth Bowen come to mind—seem very much the fancy writers, quite ready to move away from character and society into flights of speculative lyricism. (Reading Bowen's *Death of the Heart* recently, after a bout of Elizabeth Taylor, one sees how restrained, modest, and lucid is the latter's prose. For all that—or perhaps because of it—the final sentence of the excerpt above has both bite and gravity.)

IN IMPORTANT traits of character the novelist shared little in common with her women gaily buying corsets and trying out new face creams. She was, Susannah Clapp tells us,"elegant, reserved, antireligious and a Labour voter." The face which gazes out at us from my 1964 Viking issue of *The Soul of Kindness* (dedicated to Elizabeth Cameron [Elizabeth Bowen]) is composed to the point of placidity, pleasant looking if unglamorous, suggestive of few dark corners in the soul. And the constant comparisons between her and Jane Austen have in part the notion behind them that, like her predecessor, Elizabeth Taylor didn't try to do the French Revolution in her fiction, had no novelistic interest in rendering "issues" on which, as a Labour voter, she probably had pronounced opinions. It is hard not to think once again, in this connection, of Eliot's too often-quoted remark about Henry James having a mind so fine that no idea could violate it. In Taylor's case, rather than making for an emptiness of content, a felt lack of ideation, her inviolability points to something distinctive and satisfying about the quality of her narratives.

They are narratives that do not seem governed by the wish to point a moral that will adorn them. In *In a Summer Season* (1961), the heroine, Kate Heron, has remarried a younger, unreliable, bibulous, unemployed but sexy Irishman named Dermot who eventually dies in a car crash, accompanied by the seductive daughter of Kate's old friend, Charles—whereupon Kate marries the old friend and the novel ends. All the members of the family have various attitudes, mainly critical, about Kate's marriage to Dermot; but their attitudes or "ideas," if such they can be called, have nothing to do with what happens to Dermot and to Kate. In *The Soul of Kindness* it looks as if Flora—always the kind soul who encourages those around her to look on the benign side of things—gets her comeuppance when a protegé, Kit, encouraged by her in theatrical dreams of glory, tries instead to kill himself. Flora is severely shaken by this, even (we speculate) to the point of some painful self-redefinition. But in fact, after being assured by her friends that she is not to blame, she is seen at the end of the book "cheerful, and her old self again." There has been no agonizing reappraisal; life just goes on. In *Mrs. Palfrey at the Claremont* (1971), Mrs. Palfrey, hurrying to navigate the swing doors of the residential hotel in which she lives, falls, breaks her hip, and dies in hospital. The novel ends, yet there is no way in which its final event is presented to us as an ironic payment for any of the little vanities Mrs. Palfrey has indulged in throughout the book.

In fact, it is even less fun than usual to try and "tell" the story of a Taylor novel. Dr. Johnson said that if you tried to read Richardson for the story you would hang yourself; rather it was "sentiment" for which one read him. Although Elizabeth Taylor's books are never long (three of the reissued four hover around the 250 page mark), neither are they page-turners, reading situations in which we are driven along to find out what happens next. But it appears that Elizabeth Taylor made a conscious choice *not* to "drive" her narratives, so that whenever one looks for something to happen, some confrontation between two characters that would produce dramatic and revelatory action, she slides away from it, avoiding the pathos or excitement of a big scene.

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Mrs. Palfrey's real grandson, Desmond, is a selfish Hampstead twit, but she finds a marvelous substitute for him in a somewhat louche young man named Ludo, who hangs around Harrods getting material for his novel. So as to show the other residents at the Claremont that she has a relative who cares for her, she persuades Ludo to pose as the grandson, invited in for the occasional meal and drink. Eventually Mrs. Palfrey lends him money, he disappears, and it looks as though we are in for some pathos, the lonely old woman exploited by the slick, unfeeling operator. But things in life are more complicated and less definitive than that, as Ludo reappears to visit Mrs. Palfrey in the hospital before she dies:

> "You aren't going to die," Ludo said quickly.
>
> "It doesn't really matter," Mrs. Palfrey said apologetically. "Perhaps when Elizabeth [her daughter] comes, she'll see to it that I have a room of my own."
>
> "*I'll* see to it," Ludo said.
>
> "Oh, I should love it if you could. Monday seems to be so far away. I should like my own night-gown, too. And my book of poetry. I lie here trying to remember poems to take my mind off things; but they're all gone—nearly all gone."
>
> "Don't talk any more. You'll tire yourself."
>
> He covered her hand with his, and they sat in silence; she, with her eyes closed, and he staring at the clock above the door and wondering how long before he could get away.

AGAIN the writing slides away from what one might here be expecting—a moving deathbed scene between the pair. It is indeed moving, but partly for the way it refuses to advertise the purity of Ludo's feelings. He does take some caring responsibility, does in fact pay back the fifty pounds she lent him. He is a better "grandson" than her real one. Still, for all that, he stares at the clock and wonders how long he'll be forced to hang around. It is such moments in Elizabeth Taylor's writing that satisfy, even as they don't involve us in any great desire to see what happens next. Will she live or die? She doesn't much care, and neither does her creator, nor do we, since her work in this book has been done and done well.

Taylor's particular genius has to do with her ability to render embarrassment, which is eminently a social feeling and inevitably has to do with somebody's sensitivity of perception. Two examples from *In a Summer Season* suggest why it is in such renderings, rather than the development of ideas or themes, that her writing comes most to life. Kate gives a dinner party while her husband's mother, Edwina, is visiting them (not an easy situation at best), and at this dinner are her Aunt Ethel, her children, a young curate named Father Blizzard, and her father-in-law (from the first marriage), Sir Alfred. There has been a dispute over whether the turkey (purchased already plucked and trussed, which the cook feels is dangerous) has gone "off," but Kate decides to chance it anyway. The results are conveyed by the following paragraph:

> "I'm sorry to keep jumping up and down," said Dermot. "We are a little short of butlers at present." As he went round the table he observed the state of plates. Edwina had left her turkey and Ignazia [the son's girlfriend] seemed in two minds about doing so. Father Blizzard had finished his and even wore a look of simple contentment, for which Dermot was ready to forgive him his maddening geniality. "No great meat-eater," Sir Alfred muttered, and put his knife and fork together. Ethel had tried to hide most of hers under some brussel sprouts, not realizing that this would only make Kate wonder if there was something wrong with them, too.

Nothing "hilarious" in the comedy here; just extremely, coolly accurate in the various ways it names responses to the embarrassing turkey.

The second instance is more serious and more intricate in its unfolding. One of the main differences between Kate's deceased husband, Alan, and her present one is that Alan shared with her a passion for books and music, while, aside from sex, Dermot is mainly interested in booze. ("Dermot, for his part, was a minute or two earlier at the drinks tray every evening.") At one point Kate notices Dermot inspecting James's *The Spoils of Poynton*, one of Alan's favorite novels. There he discovers (though he can't identify them) lines from Donne, written in as commemorating Kate and Alan's engagement. Whereupon Dermot closes the book. Later, Kate's friend Charles speaks of someone as "Mrs. Gereth" (a character in *Spoils*), and Dermot innocently remarks that "I've never met Mrs. Gereth." Kate blushes but remains silent, and the narrator recalls her saying, years previously, "I could never have married a man who didn't dote on Jane Austen or Henry James." Then, late in the novel, Dermot, brooding and irritated already, again picks up the James novel, glances at the inscription, but this time goes further:

> The uncertainties he always felt on beginning to read a book were increased. He turned the pages. "*The Spoils of Poynton*. . . . Preface". . . . *that* he skipped. . . . "Chapter One." His expression fell into lines of great boredom as he began to read. "Mrs. Gereth had said she would go with the rest to church." He frowned, closed the book with his finger in it to mark the place and stared up at the ceiling, wondering where, lately, that rather unusual name had cropped up.

Soon he recollects the scene and "his irritation swerved suddenly into anger. Mrs. Gereth then was simply a character in a book and no one had liked to tell him so. They had preferred to gloss over his ignorance." His wife had been "embarrassed" he decides (and rightly) "as if . . . there was some awkwardness in not having read every novel that ever was written and having the names of the characters at one's finger-tips." And he throws the book across the floor.

ON OCCASION Taylor can bring off an Ivy Compton-Burnett-like exchange, as when an aunt says to her niece that "Perhaps we ought not to discuss people behind their backs," whereupon the niece sensibly replies that "We can't very well discuss them in front of them." But usually the effort is less pointed, more lifelike in the way conversation goes than such a "brilliant" exchange as the one above presents. Occasionally she indulges in the bad habit of skewering a hapless character on the strength of a sentiment he or she has professed, as when, after Sir Alfred claims something for himself, to himself, Taylor comments "This was untrue as well as uninteresting." But at her best she resists twisting her narratives into shapes which too gratifyingly exhibit the witty, moral superiority of the narrator. The result is that more than most recent novelists, even female English ones, she gives us a sense of the real, of life going on (as it were) without the help of a presiding, shaping, manipulative spirit. This is of course an illusion; that it can be entertained at all is a measure of her specialness as a writer.

An end note to each of these four volumes promises that others are to follow. One would like to speak up for *Angel* (1957), about an Ouida-like trashy

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novelist and unlike anything else she wrote; or *The Wedding Group* (1968), with its superb triangle of husband-wife-mother (-in-law); or her final book, *Blaming*, a little weary and depressed in some of its reflections, but nonetheless moving for that. Meanwhile let us be grateful for what has been re-brought to our attention. She is, as Robert Liddell once said, an exquisite writer; but she is a deep and a wise one as well.

BRIEF REVIEWS

Providence
by Anita Brookner

(Pantheon, 183 pp., $13.95)

Kitty Maule is a watcher, reserved, intelligent, and controlled. The subject of her scrutiny, and of Anita Brookner's third novel, *Providence*, is her life. It is an interesting enough life, in a modest sort of way, and Kitty knows precisely what it contains and what it lacks. She can differentiate the strains of her French and English blood, and move easily if somewhat reluctantly between being Kitty to her university colleagues and Thérèse to her housebound French grandparents. She can analyze her heart as thoroughly as she does the Romantic literature she teaches. She can catalogue her yearnings for religious faith, and see how she should go about winning the man she longs for. She is a keen observer, but by the end of *Providence* it is clear that she has gotten it all wrong.

The novel is full of missed signals; Kitty is so absorbed in her deficiencies that she cannot see them for what they are. When she learns that her lover was once engaged to a woman who left him to work as a missionary in Calcutta,

> She began to search herself for any seeds of faith that could be cultivated, for she now saw that the key to Maurice was his belief in the divine will. Or the divine purpose, if that were the same thing. Something divinely sanctioned, anyway. In her own soul she found nothing, only the weariness, boredom, and fear that had afflicted her in those churches in Normandy, where the candles guttered and the obtrusive footsteps of the faithful sounded confidently behind her.

But whenever she does feel the stirrings of faith, or even of spontaneous emotion, she quickly suppresses them. She smothers whatever is "too dangerous to contemplate," or too intimate to be revealed incautiously. Even her impatience with restraint is restrained. "I cannot stand it, she thought suddenly. I cannot stand the waiting and the carefulness. It should not be like this. And, immediately, she suppressed the thought."

When soul-searching becomes too distressing, Kitty immerses herself in her work. Not surprisingly, she is professionally concerned with the Romantic Tradition and the tension between intellectual repudiation of the existence of God and desire for a spiritual sign. Brookner is thus able to construct an elaborate intellectual framework for Kitty's crisis, a framework that becomes problematic for both Kitty and the novel.

Kitty can articulate the Romantic dilemma in academic terms, but insists upon separating her own feelings from her professional insight. After a class spent discussing the isolation felt by godless Romantic man, she is exhilarated. "She felt that she had left her onerous daily self behind, and with it all problems of nationality, religion, identity, her place in the world, what to cook for dinner, all thoughts of eventual loneliness and illness and death." Soon enough, though, she is fretting once more about her lack of conviction.

> As she lay in bed it occurred to her to turn to Marie-Thérèse's Bible and to seek out the passage that had originally comforted her. But she felt unworthy, not a believer. Maurice had talked about Providence. She was a determinist, herself. But she would give it a try, she thought wearily. Are You there she wondered, in the silence. And if so, will You let me hear from You?

At moments like this it is difficult to distinguish Brookner's perspective from Kitty's. Having set up the parallels between her character's obsessions and corresponding theoretical issues, she seems a little unsure of how to proceed. In her last novel, *Look at Me*, she exposed the ironies of her characters' predicaments with agile wit. Here, though, she is often too absorbed in presenting her themes to make clear how she feels about Kitty's cosmic preoccupations. The most casual conversation is loaded: in a railway car a chaperone dreads arriving in Paris with his rambunctious

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charges and sighs, "God help me," to which Kitty responds, "Why should God help you?" An uncomfortable sense emerges that Brookner wants to be critical of her tiresome heroine, even make fun of her, but can't quite bring herself to do it.

KATHLEEN KEARNS

C. Wright Mills: An American Utopian by Irving Louis Horowitz

(Free Press, 341 pp., $19.95)

Unlike its European counterparts, American sociology has produced few household names in the larger culture, certainly none to compare with Weber and Durkheim. The American sociologists who have captured the attention of wider publics have not ordinarily been the profession's most respected figures, but rather misfits who have simultaneously won the ear of these broader audiences and earned the contempt of their colleagues.

A case in point, perhaps *the* case in point, is C. Wright Mills. During the late 1950s when he was at the height of his powers, Mills's work was greeted with enthusiasm by a growing readership throughout the world and with equal indifference or hostility by his fellow sociologists, who attempted to read him out of the fraternity. "We all admire and love you," Carlos Fuentes wrote Mills in 1960, "not only as the United States' foremost intellectual voice, but above all, as a man and a friend." At roughly the same time, Seymour Martin Lipset dismissed Mills as one who "has little importance for contemporary sociology" but who, Lipset ruefully admitted, had nonetheless "managed to influence the outside world's image of sociology."

Both Mills's supporters and his critics responded as much to the legend that surrounded him as to the reality of the man and his work. He was in the eyes of many a burly intellectual gunslinger, the Wobbly sociologist who rode out of Texas into the streets of New York, where he traded his horse for a B.M.W. motorcycle and did battle with the rich and powerful and with the complacent liberal intellectuals who surrounded him on Morningside Heights. This image was one that endeared Mills to the New Left and that was mocked by his most hostile detractors, such as sociologist Edward Shils, who characterized him as a "cowboy student" who sallied forth against the malevolent fantasies of Madison Avenue with the works of Kafka, Trotsky, and Weber in his saddlebags. It was an image, moreover, that Mills himself both repudiated ("I am rather frightened of horses and certainly wouldn't attempt to ride one") and cultivated if it suited his purposes (as when he boosted his application for a job at Maryland with a mythical account of his prowess as a college boxer to the university's president, "Curley" Byrd, an ex-coach).

IRVING Louis Horowitz's new biography is the first full-scale attempt to push beyond the limitations of the polemics that have surrounded Mills and begin to explain the peculiar position he occupied in American intellectual life. Horowitz refers to his study as a "sociological biography" and in so doing brings to mind Mills's contention that all social study must come back ultimately to "the problems of biography, of history, and of their intersections within a society." Mills seems a perfect subject for such sociological biography, but Horowitz fails to do his subject justice. The biographical sections of the book are skimpy and unrevealing, and Horowitz's discussion of Mills's ideas is often turgid. Most disappointing of all is his failure to adequately tie together Mills's life and work. Much of Mills's writing was profoundly autobiographical, and Horowitz almost completely eschews the task of linking text and life, despite the fact that telling evidence is readily available. For example, after the publication of *White Collar*, his study of the American middle classes, Mills remarked to his friend William Miller that perhaps "everything you write about 'the new little man' isn't about anybody at all but your own god-damned self."

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Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

The High Walls of Jerusalem: A History of the Balfour Declaration and the Birth of the British Mandate for Palestine by Ronald Sanders (Holt, Rinehart and Winston). A clear and comprehensive account of one of modern diplomacy's most influential documents. (Reviewed 3/19/84)

I Wish This War Were Over by Diana O'Hehir (Atheneum). A first novel whose people and places are unforgettably vivid. (3/19/84)

Hazlitt: The Mind of a Critic, by David Bromwich (Oxford University Press). A major study of England's most restless Romantic. (3/12/84)

The Heyday of American Communism: The Depression Decade, by Harvey Klehr (Basic). The last word on the American Communist movement's ties to Moscow. (3/5/84)

Swift: The Man, His Works, and the Age, Volume Three: Dean Swift by Irvin Ehrenpreis (Harvard University Press). An exhaustive, often elegant treatment of the writer's last years. (2/13/84)

The Wall Jumper, by Peter Schneider, translated by Leigh Hafrey (Pantheon). A novel about dislocated lives on both sides of the Berlin Wall. (3/5/84)

Otto Klemperer: His Life and Times, Volume I: 1885-1933, by Peter Heyworth (Cambridge University Press). A groundbreaking account of one of the great musical figures of the century. (2/27/84)

Family Portrait with Fidel: A Memoir by Carlos Franqui (Random House). A former confidant of Castro sheds light on the origins and the failures of the Cuban Revolution. (2/20/84)

A Late Divorce, by A. B. Yehoshua, translated by Hillel Halkin (Doubleday). A wise Israeli novel, under the sign of Faulkner. (3/12/84)

Midsummer by Derek Walcott (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). A masterful fifty-four-poem sequence, which establishes the poet's place at the center of current English poetry. (1/23/84)

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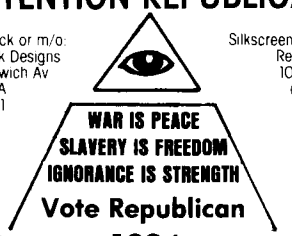

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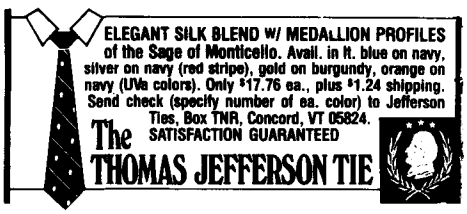
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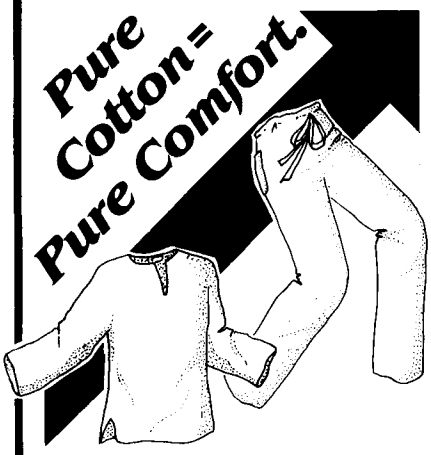

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Although he makes no use of this statement or others like it, Horowitz does, to his credit, effectively debunk the Mills myth. As he says, Mills is "ultimately best characterized in terms of seriousness" and a dedication to "the achievement of enlightenment through the classic tradition in social science." The prevailing portrait of Mills as a hip-shooting polemicist slights the substantial intellectual achievements of his brief career. In his early years as a precocious undergraduate at the University of Texas, a graduate student at Wisconsin, and a young professor at Maryland, Mills focused his interest on the social philosophy of American pragmatism, the sociology of knowledge, and social psychology. Mills published a number of important essays in this period, completed an original doctoral dissertation on *Sociology and Pragmatism*, and joined with his Wisconsin mentor Hans Gerth to bring out an eye-opening anthology of previously untranslated essays by Max Weber in 1946. In 1945 he moved from Maryland to Columbia, where he wrote the trilogy of major studies of social stratification in the United States that formed the centerpiece of his life's work: *The New Men of Power* (1948), *White Collar* (1951), and *The Power Elite* (1956). He also published what remains one of the most penetrating critiques of American sociology, *The Sociological Imagination* (1959). At his untimely death in 1962 at the age of forty-five, Mills was at work on major studies of Soviet society and of the nascent New Left and had sketched out plans for a massive work of comparative sociology.

As this record suggests, what Mills's public image, with its hint of anti-intellectual populism, most obscured was his deep and lasting commitment to intellectual craftsmanship. It was Mills's faith in the power of ideas that shaped his politics. Consequently, the politics that mattered most to him was the politics of intellectuals, which was why his sharpest criticism was reserved for intellectual "crap artists," "snots," and "enemies" who he felt had abandoned critical inquiry and democratic ideals. This combative attitude won him few friends and enabled him to keep even fewer.

Mills's own "politics of truth" was haunted by a tension between his moral hope for a reconstruction of democratic politics and the empirical evidence of his sociological research, which pointed to the consolidation of the anti-democratic drift of the post-war world. As he himself remarked, "the intellectual who remains free may continue to learn more and more about modern society, but he finds the center of political initiative less and less accessible." Mills was not alone in the effort to wrestle with this tension between political ideals and sociological insight. A similar struggle marked the careers of many of his contemporaries. What makes Mills particularly interesting is that he continued to sustain his belief in the possibility of a democratic alternative to both corporate capitalism and bureaucratic socialism at a time when nearly everyone else felt compelled, with more or less enthusiasm, to "choose the West." This left Mills prone to misplaced faith, as in his shortsighted celebration of Castro's Cuba, but it also preserved his critical perspective on his own "affluent society." Mills never lost his belief in the power of ideas and of intellectuals to transform the world, even though by the end of his life, as Horowitz observes, he was leaving his readers with "an abstract sense of good and a concrete sense of evil."

ROBERT WESTBROOK

Robert Westbrook teaches American studies and history at Yale University.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

'EBBU,' MY FOOT

To the editors:

Normally I wouldn't bother, but with the advent of St. David's Day, March 1, the national day of Wales, my British Celticity is awakened and a furious irritation born of centuries of English disdain drives me to chide you for misspelling Michael Foot's parliamentary constituency of Ebbw Vale as Ebbu Vale ("Critic and Crusader," TNR, March 12). From Shakespeare's "Fluellen" (Llewellyn) to current U.S. "Bala Sinweed" (i.e., Bala Cynwyd, near Philadelphia; properly "Kunwid") and now "Ebbu," the casual and barbarous misspellings and mispronunciations continue. There's nothing to be done, of course. English linguistic imperialism knows no check, but I expect greater care and sensibility from you.

ANTHONY DAVID MACRO
Hartford, Connecticut

TRB, *from page 4*

fort," says the *Times* reviewer, Betty Jean Lifton.

But examined in light of modern international relations theory and practice, Dr. Seuss's paradigm is defective. Take, for example, a present-day situation that may never have occurred to Dr. Seuss: the cold war between the Soviet bloc and the Western alliance. The sad dilemma of the Zooks and the Yooks differs from this standoff in at least three ways.

First, Zooks and Yooks disagree about which side their bread is buttered on. Americans and Soviets disagree about democracy and freedom, among other questions of etiquette. This is why Dr. Mary Calderone's wish for this book—"that on New Year's Day [why?] a Russian version will be wrapped in brown paper and tossed over the transom of every door in Russia"—is unlikely to come true. Second, the wall between the Yooks and the Zooks just grew. Someone built our wall, and we have reason to suspect that many on the other side would actually prefer their bread butter-side-up, if given the option, which they aren't. Third, neither Yooks nor Zooks seem to have the slightest desire to impose their bread-buttering habits on the opposing party. We, on the other hand, have some cause for concern that without the odd Triple-Sling Jigger, we'd soon be buttering our bread very differently.

I belabor these points only because lesser thinkers than Dr. Seuss have also been suggesting lately that the cold war is really about nothing at all, and that all we need to end it is for everybody to take a cold shower and cease this madness. Obviously it's worth working and risking for peace. But I worry that children may fail to explain to their parents that peace will not be as easy to come by in our world as in the world of the Yooks.

The Butter Battle Book is a sad illustration of one of Orwell's favorite themes: the corrosive effect of politics on literature. Compared to Dr. Seuss's earlier classics the drawings are tired, and the poetry is lame. (*Those Boys in the Back Room sure knew how to putter!/They made me a thing called the Utterly Sputter/and I jumped aboard with my heart all aflutter. . . .*) He even borrows a nonsense phrase ("Kick-a-poo") without credit from the late Al Capp. Doctor, doctor. Heal thyself.

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Reputations

ABOUT A CENTURY AGO, I wrote a series of articles for *Punch*, the leading humor magazine in Britain, under the running title, "The Anatomy of Reputation." I was interested in those public figures who, although they seem to have said or done very little of any merit, nevertheless pop up all the time, as members of Royal Commissions or other advisory bodies, and even as the chairmen of nationalized industries. One person I singled out was Barbara Ward (later to become Lady Jackson), a half-journalistic, half-academic economist whose duties have included everything from serving as a member of the Pontifical Commission on Peace and Justice to advising Lyndon Johnson on Vietnam. I came to the conclusion that she was appointed to such commissions because she was (a.) a woman, (b.) an economist, and (c.) a Roman Catholic. And so any government wishing to make some commission look representative could, so to speak, kill three birds with one stone. Washington is an obvious place in which to study the anatomy of reputation. I long ago ceased to expect any convincing answer to the question, "What has Elliot Richardson ever done?" But there is one question I am still dogged enough to pose: "What has Bill Moyers ever said?" Since he turned his back on his mentor and patron, Lyndon Johnson, when the going got tough in Vietnam, he has gone from program to program, from the networks to PBS and back, boring each audience to tears. With eight more months of television postmortems on the primaries and caucuses, the conventions, and the election, we must gird ourselves for many evenings of his piffling waffle. But will someone write to me when he says something?

ANOTHER REPUTATION came under my nose—the phrase is just—in Washington in the past month. For some unfortunate reason the fans (or addicts) of William Burroughs chose to celebrate his seventieth birthday here. Even more objectionably, they chose to celebrate it in what I regard as my neighborhood pub where, as I once recorded here, a chance meeting with a punk group from Scotland can offer its own instructions and even charm. But there was nothing engaging about Herb's on the night the Burroughs groupies took over the place. The groupies were from the 1950s, now not simply in their middle age, but with that sere look of clinging to a misspent youth which is what gives middle age a bad name. What Burroughs had told them, as homosexuals who still felt themselves confined in a closet, was that drugs would make it all right. Run along, get stoned, and be gay. He *et al.* (one thinks—though as little as possible—of Allen Ginsberg) were Pied Pipers; and the Pied Piper was not a nice fellow at all. Out of pique at the city fathers of Hamelin Town, he danced away all the city's children. That night Burroughs had around him, as he reached the Biblical span of his life, those he had piped to Never-Never Land. They looked very sick.

I WAS TALKING WITH some friends the other day of Howard Baker's decision not to seek reelection. (He will be only 59 a week after the elections in November.) He has for many years been the most popular politician in Tennessee. He is also retiring after four very impressive years as majority leader of the Senate—a refutation of those who dismissed him as a lightweight when he ran for the Presidential nomination four years ago. One cannot help thinking he is wise. With his popularity in his own state now unassailable, and with his national reputation higher than ever before, he will go down in history as what the headlines used to call a Solon. Reputations in politics often depend on when one chooses to end one's career. Think of how high Nixon's reputation would stand if he had not run again in 1972. Perhaps Reagan is making a similar mistake.

ALTHOUGH CELEBRITIES from the world of entertainment now come regularly to Washington, they are still seen as something of a novelty. After finding myself drinking alongside Stevie Wonder one night and Steve Allen the next, I should not have been surprised a couple of weeks later when around the corner at Herb's another invasion took place. At about 10 P.M., a succession of little foraging bands of female teenagers (I hesitate to use so plain a word as girls) came in, over-painted and with bits of fabric layered about them in a way that gave the impression that if one piece fell further off a shoulder or a breast, every tatter would fall on to their knees. "The groupies from Bethesda," a waitress whispered to me as they passed, noticing my expression of bewilderment. I waited for my adviser to pass by again, and she confided: "Groupies of Adam Ant—popular with the 14-year-olds. He's staying next door in the hotel." Adam Ant! People once came into bars in Washington to seek out Mark Hanna for a favor. How "out of it" I felt. How ignorant of my times. I turned to study the groupies again, as the black waitress asked the children from the white suburbs for their I.D.s, and suddenly I was sad for them. They imagined themselves to be so exotic and even daring. How drearily plain they will be in ten years, listening to their worn-out cassettes of Adam Ant after Phil Donahue in the morning.

WHEN WILLIAM LEAST HEAT MOON'S *Blue Highways* was published I glanced at it, and decided not to read it, for it had so much frothy filling between such thin slices of nourishment. Since I am about to embark on my own cross-country trip, I have just read it from start to finish. There are a few good things in it. A good, quick observation is his use of the number of calendars in a small-town café to judge whether the food will be good. The more years the calendars go back, the better the food will be. But as a "Journey into America," it is unenlightening. It is a self-indulgent search for himself rather than for Americans. Ordinary life does not really concern him. One would not know from it the price of a spoonful of grits anywhere in the South, or how many people go to Wrigley Field on a Wednesday afternoon. The book is vacuous. Yet it was rapturously praised by the critics, building another reputation on the flimsiest of supports. I challenge anyone to tell me what they learned about America from *Blue Highways*. Those who wish to answer can put it on the same postcard they send telling me what Bill Moyers has ever said.

H.F.

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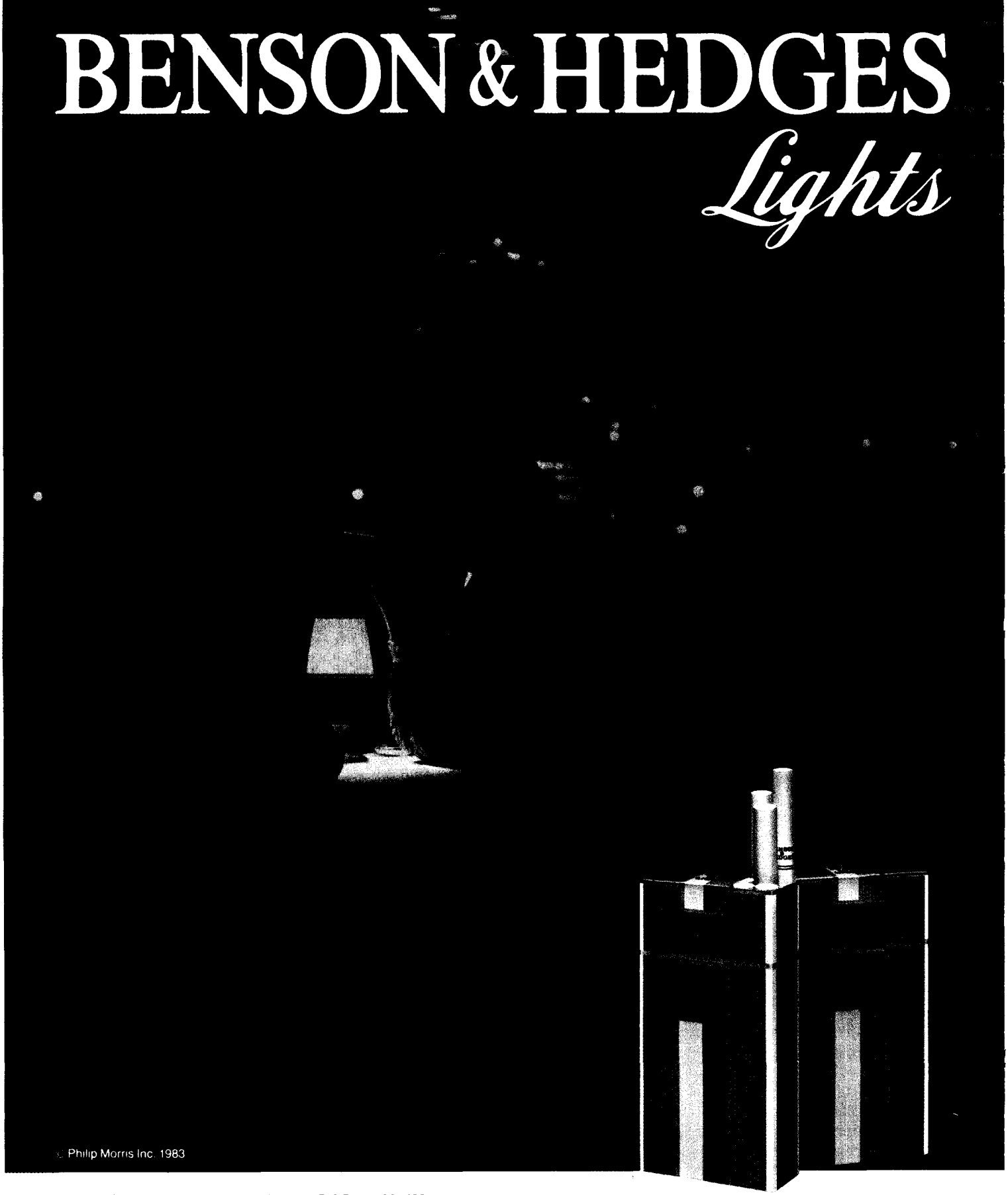

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